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A FREE and NECESSARY

# ENQUIRY,

W H E T H E R

The Church of ENGLAND,

In her **LITURGY,**

AND

Many of her learned DIVINES,

In their WRITINGS,

Have not, by some unwary EXPRESSIONS, relating to TRANSUBSTANTIATION, and the REAL PRESENCE, given so great an Advantage to Papists and Deists as may prove fatal to true Religion, unless some Remedy be speedily applied?

W I T H

REMARKS on the Power of Priestly Absolution.

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*By the Author of the System of Divinity and N. r. a-  
lity, &c.*

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**T**HE following sheets, though some time ready for the press, might have remained much longer concealed, had it not been for a late excellent pamphlet, || the perusal of which has afforded me the utmost pleasure and satisfaction; and the subject matter being of a similar nature with the general intention of this little essay of mine, some judicious friends have prevailed on me to make it public, as both of them have one and the same tendency, to *revive true Christianity*, and rescue it from its declining state. An endeavour to accomplish such great ends, is most certainly the duty of every individual, so far as his ability extends.

It is apprehended, that an attempt to represent the most solemn institution of our blessed Saviour in a plain and true light, a-

|| *Serious and free thoughts on the present state of the church, and of religion, addressed to the bishop of-----*

greeable to the most obvious and express declarations of Scripture ; to consider, and refute the false glosses, the weak and mistaken explications which many persons, very eminent both for learning and piety, have unhappily given of this ordinance ; to reconcile Scripture with Scripture, in order to reduce the differing sentiments of men to that only standard of truth ; I say, it is apprehended, and may be reasonably hoped, that such an undertaking, if executed with due care, and a strict regard to truth, to the nature and importance of the subject, cannot fail of meeting with a favourable reception from all *sincere* Christians: I mean such *only* as are inwardly convinced and persuaded in their own minds, that the Gospel of Christ, and the writings of his apostles, do in fact contain the revealed will of God to men ; and who are determined to believe and practise what is therein directed. For as to the sceptic and unbeliever, or the formal Christian, it cannot be expected that any reason or argument, of a serious religious nature, will find acceptance with them. --- This is the real design of the ensuing discourse. How far the author has performed his part, must be submitted to the judgment of the impartial reader.

It

It is a great misfortune, the very bane of true Christianity, that we have so many among us, even from the highest to the lowest ranks of people, who read more for amusement, than for information and conviction. Such persons are so attached to received principles, imbibed by education, or embraced as it were by chance, without any previous examination, whether they be right or wrong; and which, by length of time, are so rivetted in them, as to make them resist the more amiable, and gentle dictates of truth and reason; though these are indeed the most agreeable to unprejudiced minds, and to the perfection of man's nature. It is also a melancholy reflection, and occasions great concern to all good Christians, to observe in the world such multitudes of people as profess Christianity, to deviate and depart, as they do, from its most essential principles; than which nothing can more effectually tend to give countenance and encouragement to the artful designs of deists and papists; who, unless some proper methods are taken to obstruct their vigilant endeavours, they will soon, like a deluge, overspread the nation with infidelity and popery; they having already most amazingly succeeded, in de-

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stroying



stroying the vitals of natural and revealed religion.

This fact being most pathetically expressed by the present learned bishop of *Oxford*, in his charge to his clergy, p. 4, 5, 6. I beg leave to transcribe the following paragraphs.

“ An open disregard to religion is become, through a variety of unhappy causes, the distinguishing character of the present age. This evil is grown to a great height in the metropolis of the nation; is daily spreading through every part of it, bringing in such dissoluteness and contempt of principle in the higher part of the world, and such profligate intemperance and fearlessness of committing crimes in the lower, as must, if this torrent of impiety stop not, become absolutely fatal.

“ Christianity is now ridiculed and railed at with very little reserve; and the teachers of it without any at all. --- Disregard to public worship and instruction hath increased. Many are grown prejudiced against *religion*; many more indifferent about it: the emissaries of the church of *Rome* have begun to reap great harvests in the field, which hath thus been prepared for them.”

“ This

“ This melancholy state of things, says his Lordship, calls loudly upon us, (the clergy) to correct our mistakes ; to supply our deficiencies, and earnestly to beg of God, that he would direct the hearts of those who preside over the public welfare, and humbly to represent to them, on all fit occasions, the declining state of religion, and the importance and the means of preserving it. These things are unquestionable duties.”

The above author of *serious and free thoughts*, also observes, \* “ That infidelity gains ground ; loose and immoral principles spread dangerously among all ranks ; foundations seem to shake. The generality of mankind, glad to be set free from the restraints of religion, have an ear always open to what can plausibly be said to weaken its authority, and to discredit revelation. Should the conduct of its ministers give ground for strong presumption, that amidst all the zeal and solemnity of external appearances, they think lightly of these things themselves, and *subscribe* and *declare*, not according to the real sense and judgment of their own mind, but as worldly interest or

\* P. 23, 24.

party, or preferment invite --- What wonder, my lord, if men of unsettled principles, or of vicious and bad hearts, catch greedily at the occasion, and pour out all their stores of wit and ridicule, of contempt and execration on them ; rave with little reserve against priests and their craft ; call religion a cheat ; and plunge into the deepest horrors of scepticism and infidelity."

He then proceeds to assign other causes of the growth of infidelity, but has omitted *one* that I apprehend does not a little contribute to the increase of it, and which is the subject of the following discourse ; I mean, the doctrine of transubstantiation, or the real presence, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, which however disowned by our church, yet the unwary and injudicious expressions made use of in some parts of her liturgy, have afforded a handle to her enemies, who daringly charge her with the belief of the same doctrine with themselves, and even refer us to those very obnoxious expressions for the proof of it ; which is, and must be, of very dangerous consequence to the Christian and Protestant religion.

For



For though our church, in her xxviiiith article of religion, says, " That transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, and overthroweth the nature of a sacrament ; --- and \* that the sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substance, and therefore may not be adored, for that were idolatry to be abhorred of all faithful Christians:" yet, say the papists, what signifies all this parade, when the very same church, in her catechism, instructs her youth to believe, " That the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken by the faithful in the Lord's supper ;" and that the devout communicants are also directed just before receiving the bread, to pray, " Grant us, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, --- and that we may be partakers of his most blessed body and

\* The end of the communion office.

blood."

blood." And is not this sufficient, say they, for our purpose?

And may not every serious Christian naturally ask, and will not every sagacious deist certainly demand to know, which of these opposite doctrines does our church believe? For both cannot be strictly true. The discussion of this point, with respect to transubstantiation, and the real presence, and whether the church of *England* believes it, or not, is therefore modestly attempted in the following tract. For, as the above writer observes, \* ought " the name of God, and the ever blessed Trinity, and the doctrines, the rites and sacraments of Christianity to be trifled with, and profaned, and prostituted to purposes of worldly interest and ambition, without danger of divine resentment?"

It must be confessed, that the length of some of the quotations has exceeded my first design, and increased the bulk of this discourse beyond my intention. But I hope what is produced will, in general, be esteemed useful and necessary to the subject treated of, which I was determined fully to confi-

\* P. 38, 39.

der. I might indeed have cited many more authorities to the same purpose; but there seems to be sufficient.

I beg leave to conclude as the author of *serious and free thoughts* does, in his address to a certain bishop. "Christianity, my lord, lies bleeding of wounds it hath received in *the house of its friends*; wounds by far the more dangerous of any it suffers: there are few persons living more able than your lordship to close up those wounds, and to apply an healing hand. The high reverence and esteem in which your lordship is justly held by all ranks of the clergy, will give a weight and success to any salutary counsels your lordship may propose, not so easy to be obtained from any other quarter.

Through the favour of heaven, we are blessed with a government which, there is reason to believe, needs but to be petitioned by those who have the administration of *spiritual affairs*, to ease them of any grievances, to supply any defects, and to alter or reform whatever, in the present system, may need to be reformed. That your Lordship may have the unspeakable satisfaction in life, the consolation at death, and the glory in a future state, of having extended, with all the resolution and zeal of a *Christian*  
*bishop*,



*bishop*, the great power God hath given you  
 --- That when your Lordship shall soon  
 stand, (as it must, my lord, be *very soon*)  
 before the *supreme Pastor*, to render an ac-  
 count of your high station in his church, it  
 may appear to your everlasting honour, that  
 you were ready not to *risk* only, but even  
 to *sacrifice* every worldly interest, to rescue  
 the *Christian name* from the reproach you  
 saw it suffer."

And God grant that *this* bishop, and all  
*others* of our church, may seriously, and in  
 due time, consider what is so pathetically  
 urged by the above author, and likewise  
 what has been of late years, so often, and so  
 earnestly, with great submission, represented  
 to them, and which, in one particular, is  
 here also attempted by me; that they may  
 all join with one heart and mind in a vi-  
 gorous resolution to defend and support true  
 Christianity, by endeavouring to root out  
 the tares which are crept in, (and this  
 cannot surely prejudice the church of *Eng-  
 land*) that so they may be able to render  
 a true and faithful account of their minis-  
 try at the last day.

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FREE and NECESSARY

## ENQUIRY, &c.

**W**HAT a noble and pleasing idea will future ages form in their minds of the happiness of our times, when they shall read in the annals of GEORGE the Second, the blessings his subjects enjoyed; not only as to civil liberty, with respect to the common rights and properties of men, in the most extensive degree, but also as to that invaluable privilege of freely and openly examining into matters of a religious nature, in order to find out truth, and distinguish it from error and falsehood? A serious reflection on this agreeable prospect must certainly afford the greatest satisfaction to every serious and inquisitive mind. — May we ever retain a just and grateful sense of these inestimable blessings of heaven, in so singular, and almost peculiar manner, vouchsafed to *British* subjects! and may we carefully improve, and not abuse, the gracious indulgence, by turning liberty into licentiousness!

Among the many essential differences between protestants and papists, I apprehend there is no one doctrine of so much moment to true religion, as

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that

that of transubstantiation, or the change of bread and wine into the real body and blood of Christ, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, (denied by the former, but asserted, and most strangely insisted upon, by the latter ;) and this, whether we consider it as denying the true meaning of our Saviour's words, in many parts of the New Testament; or of rendering ineffectual the chief evidences we have for the truth of his Gospel, by its opposing the common senses of mankind, to which our blessed Lord constantly appealed for the proof and confirmation of his divine power, in the wonderful miracles which he wrought for that purpose: an attempt therefore to clear up and elucidate a point of so great importance, and on which the foundation of Christianity, in some measure, depends, will, I hope, meet with the general approbation of the serious and inquisitive.

As to the divine presence of Christ, he is, no doubt, spiritually present everywhere, as well as in the sacrament. This is not disputed by any one: but the question solely is, whether his body and blood be truly and really present in this sacrament, or not? for it is not pretended he is corporally so in the other sacrament, tho' it be said, "We are buried with him in baptism," nor at any other time or place. And one would imagine, that the very mentioning the stated case should, from every person's observation and experience, carry its own conviction with it, in favour of the negative.

But tho' I have taken considerable pains fully to inform my own mind, in this essential point of religion; yet I must confess, that I am not a little surprised to find in my enquiry, several expressions in our liturgy, and also in the writings of many learned and pious divines of our church, on the subject, that are most evidently contradictory to,  
and



incompatible with one another, and which (by experience I know it) afford no small advantage to papists ; who, from hence, have the confidence to assert, that the church of *England* entertains, and even professes, the same sentiments with themselves, as to the belief of transubstantiation, and the real presence. A serious reflection on *this*, with regard to the fatal consequences attending it, has induced me, for my own satisfaction, (and which perhaps may be of some use to others, in assisting them to distinguish truth from falsehood) to draw up, and concisely represent, at one view, what is acknowledged and declared by our church, and advanced by great numbers of its most eminent writers on this head : which will give the reader an opportunity of observing what a confused inconsistent jargon, or medley of contradictions, may be found in many authors, concerning an ordinance of our blessed Saviour, which in itself is the most plain and intelligible of any doctrine in the gospel, as I hope evidently to demonstrate.

But as, by a free examination into the sentiments of our church, and its most judicious divines, with respect to transubstantiation and the real presence, it will appear that their declarations and assertions are sometimes very repugnant to, and inconsistent with, each other. ; It is from thence, I confess, the less to be wondred at, that the priests of the church of *Rome* should take advantage of this, in their reasoning with protestants on the subject, and be so successful as they are, in making proselytes to their religion. This is a consideration of so much importance, as ought to, and I hope will, rouse all our governors, and every member of our church, from a seeming lethargy ; and awaken in them a serious inclination, and determined resolution, to exert themselves in their several provinces and sta-

tions, and to use their utmost endeavours, that doctrines so essential to the truth of the gospel, and the reformation of our church, may, in some public national manner, be reviewed and impartially considered, and more clearly explained, so as to be made consistent with the revelation of God's will by Christ, and the many declarations of the church of *England*; and that our enemies may no longer turn the weak reasoning and arguments of some of our own mistaken writers against us, and beat us out of the field of controversy with our own weapons, and, in consequence thereof, triumph over us, as if we believed the same thing as they do.

And if, upon a fair and impartial examination of this point, transubstantiation, and the real presence, shall evidently appear to be scripture doctrines, that then it may be proper, (and which I would even recommend) to have it more explicitly declared to be so by our governors; for everyone to profess and own the worst part of popery, without palliating or mincing the matter. But if such inconsistent, irrational, and absurd doctrines are not to be found in the writings of Christ and his apostles, the consequence of this should naturally be, that every expression in our liturgy which seems to imply, or has the least tendency to countenance or encourage the belief of tenets so monstrously absurd and idolatrous as are those of the *Romish* church, whose priests, by the magical art of using only a few words, pretend to make God our Saviour out of God's own creatures of bread and wine; and, after worshipping the same creatures of bread and wine as God, then to eat and drink the very God they just before made: for they assert, that the real body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. And surely there is the greatest reason possible,  
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that all such expressions as these in our offices should be altered and exchanged for other phrases more pertinent and agreeable to the truth of the gospel, and to the common sense of mankind; thereby to prevent the ill effects which must otherwise inevitably ensue from many pious and well-meaning, but unwary and much mistaken expressions, that are to be found in some parts of our liturgy, and the works of our learned divines, both in their discourses, and books of devotion on the Lord's supper, and which give so much countenance to papists in favour of transubstantiation, and the real presence, as I shall soon demonstrate. But in order to render an attempt of this nature plain and level to the capacities of all people, that to the truth may more manifestly appear, it will be necessary to lay before the reader a brief account of our Saviour's institution of the Lord's supper; because, from our Lord's own words, we can with the greatest certainty discover the true design of the expressions he made use of, at the time of his instituting this sacred ordinance. But, as

The Lord's supper was not only instituted at the time of the *Jewish* passover, but was in some measure taken from it, and doth in many respects bear a relation thereto; it will therefore be very proper to premise somewhat concerning the institution of the *Jewish* passover, by which means the reader will be enabled more fully to understand the nature of this sacrament, ordained by our Lord, the evening before he was to suffer the death of the cross.

A late learned prelate having represented this in a very clear and plain manner, it may have the more weight to give the *substance* of his account as near as may be in his own words. And the



same method I shall frequently take, with respect to the sentiments of others, in the ensuing discourse; I mean to curtail and abstract, but not to alter the author's opinion.

“ \* As to the occasion of instituting the *Jewish* passover, we read in *Exod.* xii. that when God was about to deliver the children of *Israel* out of their bondage in *Egypt*, and to the end that *Pharaoh* might let them go, had determined to slay all the first-born of the *Egyptians*, he commanded by the hand of *Moses*, that in the evening of that night, in which he meant to do this, every house of the children of *Israel* should slay a lamb without blemish, and take of the blood, and strike it on the posts of their houses, that it might be a token to the destroying angel, not to slay the first-born in any of the houses where the blood was seen. Which slaying of the lamb, if it was for the redemption of their first-born, as it seems to have been, was very agreeable to the end and design of expiatory sacrifices from the beginning, wherein God was pleased to accept the blood of beasts for the lives of men; and which he had most remarkably done, in accepting a ram for the life of *Isaac*, when *Abraham* was about to offer him, in obedience to God's command.

When the lamb was slain, and the blood stricken on the posts of the houses, it was eaten by the family, (as peace-offerings and sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving were afterwards ordered to be) and what remained was burnt with fire. (*Lev.* vii. 15.) And it was eaten with unleavened bread (which is heavy and unsavoury) and with bitter herbs, in token of the hard bondage which they had endured in *Egypt*. --- He also commanded that the same should be observed and repeated

\* *Gibson* on the sacrament, p. 14, &c.



by them, for a perpetual ordinance, as long as they continued a people, (*Exod. xii.*) and the end of making it a perpetual ordinance is thus expressed; "And it shall come to pass when your children shall say unto you, what mean you by this service? that ye shall say, it is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of *Israel* in *Egypt*, when he smote the *Egyptians*, and delivered our houses." Their manner of holding the passover was thus; after the master of the house had taken and eaten of the bitter herbs himself, and distributed to the rest, he related the history of the miseries of their fore fathers in *Egypt*; which being ended, he took unleavened cakes, and having blessed them, eat, and distributed them, saying, "This is the bread of affliction, which our fore fathers did eat in *Egypt*." Then he also distributed the lamb, which was followed by a cup of wine, first blessed, and then distributed. And the whole service was concluded with an hymn of praise and thanksgiving, namely, the 113th and 114th psalms\*.

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\* Bishop *Burnet* gives the following account of the passover. "The *Jews* were required once a year to meet at *Jerusalem*, in remembrance of the deliverance of their fathers out of *Egypt*. *Moses* appointed that every family should kill a lamb, whose blood was to be sprinkled on the door posts, and lintels, and whose flesh they were to eat, (*Exod. xii. 11.*) at the sight of which blood thus sprinkled, the destroying angel that was to be sent out to kill the first-born of every family in *Egypt*, was to pass over all the houses that were so to be marked. And from that passing by, or over, the *Israelites*, the lamb was called the Lord's *passover*, as being then the sacrifice, and afterwards the memorial of that passover. The people of *Israel* were required to keep up the memorial of that transaction, by slaying a lamb before the place where God should set his name, and by eating it up that night: they were also to eat with it a salad of bitter herbs, and unleavened bread. And when they went to eat of the lamb, they repeated these words of *Moses*, that it was the Lord's *passover*. But though the first lamb that was killed in *Egypt*, was indeed the sacrifice upon which God promised to pass over their houses, yet the  
lamb:

In this short account of the *Jewish* passover we see a solemn ordinance instituted by God, in commemoration of the greatest deliverance he ever vouchsafed to that people; with a command that they and their posterity should observe it as long as they continued a nation. God also established a peculiar covenant with the seed of *Jacob*, from whom the Messiah promised to *Abraham* was to come; besides the covenant of circumcision, which was common to the whole seed of *Abraham*: and we find it to be a very early practice, not only to worship God by sacrifices, but also to make and ratify covenants by blood. And from the institution of the passover, and of the covenant which God entered into with the *Israelites*, it plainly appears, that all this was a type and figure of our Saviour Christ, and of the greater deliverance from the slavery of sin and Satan, which he wrought for mankind by his blood. Thus, in allusion to the sacrament, Christ is called "the lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world;" (*John* i. 29.) and we are said "to be redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish, and without spot," (*1 Pet.* i. 19.) and Christ is stiled, "the lamb that was slain, and that redeemed us to God by his blood;" (*Rev.* v. 9.) which redemption was not

lamb that were afterwards offered were only the *memorials* of it, though they still were called the *Lord's passover*. So that the *Jews* were, in the paschal supper, accustomed to call the memorial of a thing by the name of that of which it was the memorial. And our Saviour therefore chose the time of the passover to offer himself up for us, and did institute the *Lord's supper* to be a memorial of it, while he was celebrating the *Jewish* pascha with his disciples, who were so much accustomed to the forms and phrases of that supper, in which every master of a family did officiate among his household, that it was very natural for them to understand all that our Saviour said, or did, according to those forms with which they were acquainted." *Burnet* on xxxix art. p. 386. oct. edit.

only



only wrought for us by Christ at the time of the *Jewish* passover \*, but the memorial of it, which he then instituted, was the very bread and wine which were ordinarily used and blessed in the celebration of the passover, only they were consecrated by him to be memorials of a far greater deliverance and blessing; the bread, and the distribution of it, to represent the body broken; and the wine, as distinct from it, to represent his blood, shed for the deliverance of mankind from the dominion of Satan.

As for the lamb, Christ himself was now to be slain instead of it; and the hymn which our Saviour and his disciples sung on that occasion, was probably the very same hymn of blessing and thanksgiving that the *Jews* usually sung after their passover. In allusion to which, and to the cup of blessing, that among the *Jews* did immediately precede the concluding hymn, St. Paul (1 Cor. x. 16.) calls the cup in the communion the cup of blessing; and blessing, in the language of holy scripture, is the same with praising and giving of thanks. Again,

As the passover was to remain among the *Jews* a standing memorial of their deliverance, as long as they continued a nation, so Christ, being about to fulfill and abolish that type, by the offering of himself, thereby to work for mankind a spiritual redemption from sin and Satan, did establish a standing memorial of this deliverance, to be celebrated among Christians, to the end of the world, or till his second coming. “ This do, says our Saviour, in remembrance of me;” and says St. Paul, “ As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup,

\* N. B. It is submitted to the consideration of the learned, whether the redemption wrought by Christ, was perfected till he offered up his spirit to God upon the cross? if not, the bishop is mistaken.

“ ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.”  
 (1 Cor. xi. 26.) That by the remembrance of those blessings and benefits, communicated by them, at the celebration of this ordinance, and represented to their minds by the visible signs of bread and wine, it might excite in them a great thankfulness, and a suitable sense of duty, with serious resolutions and vows of obedience.” Thus far bishop *Gibson*.

“ This analogy of the holy eucharist to the *Jewish* passover, (says archbishop *Wake*) was not the original remark of any protestant, or indeed of any other Christians, differing from the church of *Rome* in this point; but was objected to them long before the reformation, by the *Jews* themselves, to shew, that in their literal interpretation of these words, they had manifestly departed from the intention of our blessed Saviour, and advanced a notion in which it was impossible for his apostles, or any other, acquainted as they were with the paschal forms, ever to have understood him. And if St. *Austin*, who I suppose will not be thought a heretic by either party, may be allowed to speak for the Christians, he tells us, we are to look upon the phrase, *this is my body*, just, says he, as when in ordinary conversation we are wont to say, *this is Christmas*, or *Good-Friday*, or *Easter-day*; not that this is the very day upon which Christ was born, or suffered, or rose from the dead, but the return, or remembrance, of that day, on which Christ was born, or suffered, or rose again. — And the ground of this mistake is, their want of considering the customs and phrases of the *Jewish* passover, and upon which both the holy eucharist itself, and these expressions in it, were founded \*.

\* *Wake’s* discourse on the eucharist, p. 16, 17.

It would be well if the impartial reader did wisely weigh, and seriously reflect on this paragraph.

This analogy being fully demonstrated, I now proceed to what was before promised; namely, to give a brief account of our Saviour's institution of this sacrament, as the same is recorded and represented to us in the New Testament; from whence only we can learn the truth of this very momentous and important concern.

St. *Matthew* thus relates it. "And as they  
 " were eating, *Jesus* took bread, and blessed it,  
 " and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and  
 " said, take eat, this is my body. And he took  
 " the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them,  
 " saying, drink ye all of it: for this is my blood  
 " of the New Testament, which is shed for ma-  
 " ny, for the remission of sins." (*Mat.* xxvi. 26.)  
 St. *Mark* thus records it. "And as they did eat,  
 " *Jesus* took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and  
 " gave it to them, and said, take, eat; this is my  
 " body. And he took the cup, and when he had  
 " given thanks, he gave it to them; and they all  
 " drank of it. And he said unto them, this is my  
 " blood of the New Testament, which is shed for  
 " many." (*Mark* xiv. 22.) St. *Luke* relates it  
 after this manner. "And he took bread, and  
 " gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them,  
 " saying, this is my body, which is given for you;  
 " this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also  
 " the cup after supper, saying, this cup is the  
 " New Testament in my blood, which is shed for  
 " you." (*Luke* xxii. 19, &c.) And St. *Paul*,  
 having occasion to rebuke the *Corinthians* for their  
 indecent and unchristian behaviour at the Lord's  
 table, gives the following account of the original  
 institution of this ordinance. "For I have re-  
 " ceived of the Lord that which also I delivered  
 " unto



“ unto you, that the Lord *Jesus*, the same night  
 “ in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when  
 “ he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, take,  
 “ eat ; this is my body which is broken for you :  
 “ this do in remembrance of me. After the same  
 “ manner also he took the cup, when he had sup-  
 “ ped, saying, this cup is the New Testament in  
 “ my blood ; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in  
 “ remembrance of me.” And then adds as of  
 himself, “ For as often as ye eat this bread, and  
 “ drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death  
 “ till he come.” (1 Cor. xi. 23, &c.)

From this just account of the Lord’s supper, as  
 represented in the New Testament, who could ever  
 have imagined, had not woful experience veri-  
 fied the melancholy truth, that an institution of  
 Christ, ordained and established by him, in expres-  
 sions so clear, plain, and easy, so similar and near-  
 ly adapted to the manner and phraseology of the  
*Jewish* passover, which had been just before cele-  
 brated by our Saviour and his disciples, should  
 have occasioned so many disputes, concerning a  
 change of the bread and wine (in any manner  
 whatsoever) into the real body and blood of Christ,  
 when it is most notoriously evident, that they were  
 only symbols and signs to represent the same ? or  
 about the nature and design of the Lord’s supper,  
 and the necessary preparations rightly to partici-  
 pate thereof ? Or who could think it possible that  
 these words of our Saviour, *this is my body*, and  
*this is my blood*, speaking of the bread and wine  
 then present, should be the cause of innumerable  
 thousands of pious good Christians being cruelly,  
 and without mercy, burnt or massacred, only for  
 not acknowledging the doctrine of transubstanti-  
 ation ; did not barbarous bloody and inhuman  
 papists afford us numberless instances of it in our  
 own

own kingdoms, and many other parts of the world? when yet neither they themselves, (cannot in truth) nor the more human *Jews*, who still continue to eat of their passover, do not suppose or believe any change to be made therein; tho' the words, *this is the Lord's passover*, used by them upon that occasion, are as full, absolute, and positive, as *this is my body*, and *this is my blood*, in the institution of the Lord's supper. But as this matter, which is of exceeding great moment to the truth of Christianity, will be more particularly considered in this essay, I shall now proceed to observe the different expressions made use of by our Lord, in the institution of this ordinance, according to the account given of it above.

“Take, eat, this is my body,” is all that *St. Matthew* and *St. Mark* relate of it. *St. Luke* and *St. Paul* are somewhat larger; who say, “This is my body which is given (or broken) for you.” And both add, “this do in remembrance of me.” As to the cup, *St. Mark* represents Christ as saying, “This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many;” *St. Matthew* adds “for the remission of sins.” *St. Luke* thus expresses it, “This cup is the New Testament, in my blood, which is shed for you.” *St. Paul* says the same, adding, “This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.” From this different manner of expression, it is evident that the apostles and evangelists did not think it necessary for each of them to relate all the words which our Lord made use of, believing it sufficient to represent exactly the intent of the whole. And from hence it plainly appears, that they did not understand the words of the institution to relate to Christ's body and blood in a literal sense.

For

For it is to be observed, That the whole form of this institution is expressed in the figurative way, and that therefore every part ought to be understood in the same manner. Thus all admit, that the cup mentioned by St. *Luke*, and St. *Paul*, does not signify the cup, but the wine in the cup ; and it is allowed by all, that this wine is not itself the new covenant, nor yet changed or transubstantiated into it, but is only the memorial of the new covenant. If therefore, by the cup, in the words of institution, is meant the wine in it, and not the cup ; if the wine in it be not itself the new covenant, though as expressly declared to be so as the bread is said to be Christ's body, or the wine his blood ; it then follows by all the rules of interpretation, agreeably to the way of speaking throughout the whole institution, that the bread and wine are not the natural body and blood of Christ, but the memorials of them. To say otherwise is to affirm, that the same manner of expression in this institution, must in one part be interpreted figuratively, merely to avoid absurdities, and yet in another part it must be interpreted literally, though attended with the greatest heap of contradictions and absurdities.

In truth, these figurative expressions were not only then commonly used among the *Jews*, but have been, and still are so, in all countries and languages. And no Christian, learned or unlearned, ever thought our Saviour was a vine, or a door, though he expressly affirms himself to be both\*.

The

\* " It is observable that our Saviour did frequently follow that common way of instruction among the *Eastern* nations, by figures that to us would seem strong and bold. These were much used in those parts, to excite the attention of the hearers, and they are not always to be severely expounded, according to the full extent that the words



The passages which I have now set before the reader, are the only ones in the New Testament, that give us any information with respect to the institution of the Lord's supper, and which are, in themselves, of the greatest plainness and simplicity. The original account of it (and which is surely the best) takes up but two or three small verses in any one of the evangelists; or in *St. Paul*, who had more occasion, from the abuse of some Christians, to enlarge upon it. And yet what pains have some taken, since the first ages of Christianity, to render that a matter of intricacy and terror to many good christians, which their master left plain and clear, and level to the meanest capacity. But let any one, of the lowest understanding, judge whether more regard ought not to be paid to our blessed Lord himself, in an affair which solely depended upon his will, than to those who cannot pretend to have their instruction immediately from him? or whether it be not both more pious and reasonable to believe, that our Lord himself sufficiently declared his mind, about his own institution, to his own immediate followers; than to imagine he left it to be declared for him, by men who should live some hundred years after the first institution of this ordinance. .

words will bear. The parable of the unjust judge, of the unjust steward, of the ten virgins, of plucking out the right eye, and cutting off the right hand or foot, and several others, might be instanced. Our Saviour, in these, considered the genius of those to whom he spoke: so that these figures must be restrained only to that particular for which he meant them; and must not be stretched to every thing to which the words may be carried. Our Saviour compares himself to a great many things; to a vine, a door, and a way. — If this sacrament had been that mysterious and unconceivable thing which it has been since believed to be, surely the books of the New Testament, the acts of the apostles, and their epistles, would have contained fuller explanations of it, and larger instructions about it." *Burnet on art.* p. 391, &c. oct. edit.

It appears then, from the words of scripture before produced, that the end for which our Lord instituted his supper, was the remembrance of himself. That the bread to be taken and eaten, was appointed to be the memorial of his body broken, and the wine of his blood shed; or, according to *St. Paul*, that the one was to be eaten, and the other to be drank, in remembrance of Christ; and this to be continued until he, who was once present with his disciples, and is now absent, shall come again. This observation affords us a strong, but plain argument, to prove the absurdity and falsehood of the doctrine of transubstantiation, or change of the bread and wine into the natural body and blood of Christ; or of any bodily presence of Christ in the sacrament.

For the doing any act in remembrance of a person, implies his bodily absence; and if he is corporally present, it cannot be said we perform that action in order to remember him. As therefore, in the places before-mentioned, it is declared, that the end of this institution was the remembrance of Christ; it must necessarily follow, that to eat and drink in the Lord's supper, must be in a sense consistent with the notion of this remembrance. And therefore to suppose, or teach, that Christians eat his *natural* body, in remembrance of his *real* natural body; and drink his *natural* blood, in remembrance of his *real* natural blood; is to teach, that they are to do something in order to remember him, which yet at the same time supposes him to be corporally present; thereby destroying the very notion of that remembrance, and directly contradicting the most important words of the institution itself. And *St. Paul* also expressly declares, that as oft as Christians eat this bread, and drink this cup, (he does not say feed upon Christ then

then corporally present) they shew, or tell forth, by these actions, his death *till he come*; that is, until he shall be again corporally present with them. This strongly implies the belief of his bodily absence, and that his bodily presence is absolutely inconsistent with the performance of that duty. Whoever then requires Christians to believe, that they feed in the Lord's supper upon Christ's natural body present, or drink his natural blood, do in effect forbid them to eat this bread, and drink of this cup, in remembrance of his body crucified, and his blood shed for the sins of the world \*: and yet this is what the church of *Rome* doth believe and teach, as I am now to prove.

Their doctrine of transubstantiation may be easily learnt from three or four canons established by the council of *Trent*, which is their oracle of religion, and I will give them the reader, word for word, as translated by a learned prelate, archbishop *Sharp* †.

*Sess. 13. Can. 1.* “ If any one shall deny, that  
“ in the sacrament of the eucharist, there is con-  
“ tained, truly, really, and substantially, the body  
“ and blood, together with the soul and divinity  
“ of our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.”

*Can. 2.* “ If any one shall say, that in the sa-  
“ crament, there doth remain the substance of  
“ bread and wine, together with the body and  
“ blood of Christ, and shall deny the conversion  
“ of the whole substance of the bread into the bo-  
“ dy, and of the whole substance of the wine into  
“ the blood [of Christ] the species or accidents  
“ only of the bread and wine remaining, which  
“ conversion or change the catholic church doth

\* *Headly* on the sacrament.

† *Serm.* vol. vii. p. 270. also see archbishop *Wake's* discourse of the holy eucharist, *Anno* 1687, p. 9, 10, &c.



“ aptly call by the name of transubstantiation, let  
 “ him be accursed.”

*Can. 3.* “ If any shall deny, that in the sacra-  
 “ ment the whole Christ is contained in either  
 “ kind, nay and in every part of either kind,  
 “ when one part is separated from another, let  
 “ him be accursed.”

*Can. 4.* “ If any one shall say, that in the sa-  
 “ crament, after the words of consecration are  
 “ said, there is not the body and blood of Christ,  
 “ save only in the present use of them, while they  
 “ are taken and received, but that they are not  
 “ there either before or after, or that the true bo-  
 “ dy of Christ doth not remain in the consecrated  
 “ wafers that are left, or that are reserved after  
 “ the communion, let him be accursed.” \*

The archbishop observes, that in these four ca-  
 nons the following points are plainly contained,

\* We learn from bishop *Patrick*, that it was an ancient custom for the several families in a town to bring to the priest the flower which made, the *Lord's bread*, as it was called, or else to bring a loaf ready made by a common distribution, which was called their oblation, and the host, (being the representation of our Saviour's sacrifice on the cross.) But when the church was increased in number, but grew less in sanctity, this loaf dwindled from a great one to a little, according to the small number of communicants, till there being none at all, it shrunk up into a wafer, or a little thin bit of bread, like a small piece of money, (which some of the people offered instead of meal) being just enough for the priest to eat, when there was none to receive with him. This is the original of wafers, which still retains the name of the host by the papists. *Patrick's necessity and frequency of communion*, p. 87.

The doctrine of transubstantiation, in all probability, came from the same original. For the priest being left alone at the communion, it was found necessary for him to magnify what he did there, in order to induce the people to bring their offerings more freely, tho' they did not receive with him. This was done in so extraordinary a manner, that it produced this absurd and ridiculous notion, that he held the very natural body and blood of Christ in his hands after the consecration. Which fancy more easily obtained by the help of the wafers beforementioned. For they having neither the form nor figure of bread, nor being like any sort of food, served to banish out of peoples minds the thoughts of any such thing as bread, which they received in the holy communion. †

† *ibidem* p. 89.

and

and which will give us a full account of their doctrine of transubstantiation. 1st, That after the words of consecration are spoken, there is no bread nor no wine upon the table. 2dly, That tho' there be no bread nor wine, yet the accidents, that is, the colour, the shape, the bigness, the weight, the taste, and the other qualities of the bread and wine do remain. But neither in the bread, nor in the body of Christ, but by themselves; not in the bread, for bread there is none; not in the body of Christ, for they will not allow us to say that the body of Christ is round, or sweet, or white, or the like. 3dly, That in the place of the substance of bread and wine, by the virtue of five words (*for this is my body*) there is the substance of the body and blood of Christ, together with his soul and divinity; though it is confessed at the same time, that Christ hath but one body, which is in heaven. 4thly, That this body and blood, as it is whole in the whole bread and wine, and as both body and blood are whole in the bread alone, so it is whole also in every crumb of that bread, which doth admirably consist with the notion of a body. 5thly, The body of Christ is eaten by every communicant both good and bad; and not only so, but this body remains in those wafers that are not eaten; so that if, after the sacrament, a mouse should devour one of these wafers, it would as really eat the body of Christ as any Christian: or if the wafers should be burnt with fire, then the body of Christ would be also really burnt. For these things cannot be prevented but by as great a miracle as the first production of Christ's body. Lastly, This change, or conversion, of the whole substance of bread and wine into the whole substance of the body and blood of Christ, together with his soul and divinity, is most aptly, by

the catholic church, called transubstantiation. By this account the reader will in some measure discover what that hard word means, and what the doctrine of the church of *Rome* is, in this matter.

As to the time and occasion of the coming in of this doctrine in the Christian church, "It must be observed, says *Tillotson*, that the notion of the corporal presence of Christ was first started upon occasion of the dispute about the worship of images; in opposition to which the synod of *Constantinople*, about the year 750, did assert that our Lord having left no other image of himself but the sacrament, in which the substance of bread is the image of his body, we ought to make no other image of our Lord. But in 787, the second council of *Nice* declared, that the sacrament is not the image and anti-type of Christ's body and blood, but is properly his body and blood. So that the corporal presence of the body of Christ in the sacrament, was first brought in to support the stupid worship of images. Indeed it could never have come in upon a more proper occasion, nor be applied to a fitter purpose. And as this was the first original of introducing this doctrine among the *Greeks*, so in the *Latin* or *Roman* church, *Paschasius Radbertus*, an abbot of *Corbey*, first broached it in the year 818. But it was almost 300 years that this doctrine was contested in the christian church, before transubstantiation could be brought into the form into which it is now settled and established in the church of *Rome*; namely from 787 to 1079. In truth, the end of the eleventh century was the most likely time of all other, from the beginning of Christianity, for so gross an error to appear; it being, by the confession of their own historians, the most dark and dismal time that ever happened to the Christian church, both for ignorance, superstition



perdition and vice. It came in together with idolatry, as before observed, and was made use of to support it, as being a fit and proper companion for it \*.” And to the same purpose writes archbishop Wake †.

Having thus shewn what the church of *Rome* teaches us concerning transubstantiation, when, and upon what occasion, this monstrous and absurd doctrine was first introduced into the Christian church; I will now go on to represent as briefly as possible, what the sentiments of the church of *England* are, with respect to the belief of transubstantiation. And the best way to discover this will be by consulting her articles of religion, her liturgy, and the writings of her most eminent divines.

Our church declares, in the 28th article of religion, that “ transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of bread and wine) in the supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy writ, but it is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. The body of Christ is given, and taken, and eaten, in the supper, after a heavenly spiritual manner: and the mean, whereby the body of Christ is received, and eaten in the supper, is faith.” But in the edition of these articles in *Edward VI*’s reign, the following words were added against transubstantiation. “ Forasmuch as the truth of man’s nature requireth, that the body of one and the self-same man cannot be at one time in divers places, but must needs be in one certain place; therefore the body of Christ cannot be present at one time in many

\* *Tillotson*, fol. vol. i. p. 306.

† *Wake*’s disc. of the eucharist, pref. p. 6.

and divers places. And because, as holy Scripture doth teach, Christ was taken up into heaven, and there shall continue unto the end of the world; a faithful man ought not either to believe, or openly to confess, the real and bodily presence, as they term it, of Christ's flesh and blood, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper \*."

When these articles, says *Burnet*, "were first prepared by the convocation, in Queen *Elizabeth's* reign, this paragraph was made a part of them. But the design of the government being to bring over the body of the nation, who in general believed the corporal presence of Christ in the sacrament, it was thought expedient not to offend them, and therefore the word *real presence* was rejected. We however see what was the sense of the first convocation in *Q. Elizabeth's* reign, which differed nothing from that of king *Edward's*. And tho' this paragraph is now no part of our articles, yet we are certain that the clergy, at that time, did not at all doubt the truth of it, though they did not think fit to publish it at first, and though it was afterwards changed for another, that was the same in sense." *Burnet* on the 28th article.

At the end of the communion office, it is declared, "that the sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substances, and therefore may not be adored, (for that were idolatry to be abhorred of all faithful Christians.) The

\* The words in the 28th article being what I do not understand, I would beg leave to propose the following queries, in hopes that some able person will give me satisfaction therein. — If the body of Christ be taken and eaten in the sacrament, after a heavenly and spiritual manner; how can beings such as we are, composed of flesh and blood, take and eat a body that is spiritual? can this be proved, either by scripture or reason? Again. If Christ's body be either present in the sacrament, or eaten there by the communicants; is it his dead body, or his glorified heavenly body? but can either of these now appear on earth, or be eaten by mortal men?

natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here; it being against the truth of Christ's natural body, to be, at one time, in more places than one †."

And for the further ascertaining and clearing the sense of our church in this matter, I will now produce the sentiments of its most eminent writers. And as archbishop *Cranmer* had the principal hand in compiling both our liturgy and articles, I will first begin with him. The following passage of that great man is to be found in the preface of his book against *Gardiner*, as archbishop *Sharp* informs us §.

" When, says *Cranmer*, I say and repeat many times in my book, that the body of Christ is present in them that worthily receive the sacrament, lest any man should mistake my words, and think I mean, that although Christ be not corporally in the outward visible signs, yet he is corporally in the persons that duly receive them; this is to advertise the reader, that I mean no such thing. But my meaning is, that the force, the grace, the virtue, and benefits of Christ's body that was crucified for us, and of his blood that was shed for us, be really and effectually present with all them that duly receive the sacrament. But all this I understand of the spiritual presence, of which he saith, " I will be with you to the end of the world. And wheresoever two or three are gathered toge-

† It is also said, at the end of the communion, " That the natural body and blood of Christ, are in heaven, and not here." If by the natural body and blood of Christ, be meant his body when on earth, consisting of flesh and blood, I would ask, whether any such body can be now in heaven? for can flesh and blood inherit the kingdom of God? how is it possible then, that the body and blood of Christ, of any sort or kind, can be in the Lord's supper? was this seriously and duly considered, I apprehend there would soon be an end of transubstantiation, and the real presence.

§ *Sharp's* serm, vol. 7. p. 369.



ther in my name, there I am in the midst of them. And he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. Nor no more truly is Christ corporally or really present in the due administration of the Lord's supper, than he is in the due administration of baptism; that is to say, in both spiritually, by grace. And where-soever in the scripture it is said, that Christ, God, or the Holy Ghost, is in any man, the same is to be understood spiritually, by grace." These are the words of that excellent archbishop and martyr, and contain a very plain and true explication of our Saviour's expression. Hence it evidently appears to be the opinion of this great and good man, that Christ is no way present in either of the sacraments, as to his body and blood, and is so in no other sense than God is, namely, by the gracious assistance and influence of his holy Spirit, to all pious Christians, in prayer, and other offices of religion, towards enabling them to perform all the duties of a Christian life. And with this first reformer also agree his cotemporaries, both at home and abroad.

Bishop *Ridley*, his companion both in doctrine and suffering, says archbishop *Wake* \*, had the same idea with *Cranmer*. He tells us, "that the substance of the true body and blood of Christ is always in heaven, nor shall it depart thence before the end of the world. That the human nature of Christ is in heaven, and cannot, in *any manner*, lie hid under the form of bread. --- The substance of his body and blood, being conjoined to his divine nature, has not only life in itself, but can, and is wont, to bestow it upon all those who partake of it, and believe in his name. --- Nor is it any hin-

\* *Wake's discourse on the eucharist*, p. 55:

drance to this, that Christ still remains in heaven, and that we are upon earth. For by grace, that is life, (as St. *John* interprets it, ch. vi.) and the properties of it, as far as may be profitable to us, in this our pilgrimage here below, he is with us to the end of the world. As the sun, who though he never leaves his orb, yet by his life, heat, and influence, is present to us."

Bishop *Jewel*, a person of great learning and eminence in our church, at the time of the reformation, after giving his sentiments on the real presence, adds, --" Yet we say not, either that the substance of bread and wine is done away; or that Christ's body is let down from heaven, or made really or fleshly present in the sacrament. We are taught, according to the doctrine of the old fathers, to lift up our hearts to heaven, and there to feed upon the Lamb of God.-- Thus spiritually, and with the mouth of faith, we eat the body of Christ, and drink his blood; even as verily as his body was verily broken, and his blood verily shed upon the cross. --- Indeed, the bread that we receive with our bodily mouths is an earthly thing, and therefore a figure; as the water in baptism is also a figure. But the body of Christ that thereby is represented, and there is offered to our faith, is the thing itself, and not a figure. To conclude, three things herein we must consider; 1. That we put a difference between the sign, and the thing itself that is signified. 2. That we seek Christ above in heaven, and imagine him not to be present bodily upon the earth. 3. That the body of Christ is to be eaten by faith only, and none otherwise \*." I will not trouble the reader with more extracts from our *English* divines at the time of

\* Ibidem p. 59:

our reformation ; and as to the sentiments of some of the then foreign reformers, let me refer him to the same discourse of the learned Dr. *Wake*, where, from p. 47 to 53, he may receive great satisfaction.

It must be confessed, that our first both *English* and foreign reformers, have at times expressed themselves, when treating on the Lord's supper, in terms too similar to the papists, with a view, it may be supposed, the more pathetically to describe the sublimity and sacredness of that holy ordinance ; and yet, as the reader may see above, they all steadfastly united to disown the monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation. Indeed, as they had then so lately reformed from popery, we may imagine that the expressions used by them having been before familiar to them, this might occasion their retaining them, though at the same time they rejected a doctrine so absurd and idolatrous as transubstantiation. But much pity it is, that they had not utterly discarded both the one and the other ; since we find that such expressions have given our popish adversaries a very great advantage over us, as having no small tendency to increase their numbers in our age. And to the like purpose,

It is observed by the same learned *Wake* \*, “ that the holy fathers, in their popular discourses, spared no words, (except that of transubstantiation, which not one of them ever used) to set off so great a mystery. And I believe, that were the sermons and devotional treatises of our own divines alone, since the reformation, searched into, one might find expressions among them as much overstrained. And doubtless these would be as strong an argu-

\* Ibidem p. 24. N. B. He refers to a treatise on the adoration of, &c. which would (says he) make the world believe, we hold, I know not what imaginary real presence, just as truly as the fathers did transubstantiation,



ment to prove transubstantiation now the doctrine of the church of *England*, as for those to argue it to have been the opinion of those primitive times."

" But if we consult these men in their more exact composures, when they come to teach, not to declaim, we shall find they will then tell us, that these elements are for their substance what they were before, bread and wine; that they retain the true properties of their nature, to nourish and feed the body; that they are things inanimate, and void of sense. That, with reference to the holy sacrament, they are images, figures, signs, symbols, memorials, types, and anti-types, of the body and blood of Christ." For the truth of which he refers in the margin to several authors.

The ever memorable Mr. *Hales* of *Eaton*, justly so called, as being a divine of great learning and integrity in the reign of *James I.* remarking on the doctrine of the reformed churches, and that of *Rome*, concerning the presence of Christ in the eucharist, thus expresses himself: \* " The first mistake common to both is, that they ground themselves much upon the words of consecration, as they are called; and suppose that upon pronouncing those words, something befalls that action, which otherwise would not; and that without those words (this is; my body, blood) the action were lame. I must confess my ignorance; I find no ground for the necessity of this doing. Our Saviour, when he instituted that sacrament, commands us to do what he did; but leaves no precept of saying any words. Neither will it be made appear, that either the blessed apostles, or primitive Christians had any such custom; nay,

\* Tract. duod. p. 41, &c.

the contrary will be made probably to appear out of the ancientest writings of the church's ceremonies. Our Saviour indeed used the words, but it was to express what his meaning was. Had he barely acted the thing, without expressing himself by some such form of words, we could never have known what it was he did. But what necessity is there of doing so now? for when the congregation is met together, to the breaking of bread and prayer, and we see bread and wine upon the communion table, is there any man can doubt of the meaning of it, although the canon, (that is the words, this is my body, blood) be not read? It was for the further solemnizing and beautifying that holy action, which brought the canon in; and not the opinion of adding any thing to the substance of the action. For that the words were used by our Saviour to work any thing upon the bread and wine, can never out of scripture or reason be deduced; and beyond these *two*, I have no ground for my religion, neither in substance, nor in ceremony. The main foundation that upholds the necessity of this form of action now in use, is church custom and church error.

To the perfection of a sacrament, or holy mystery, it is sufficient that one thing be done, whereby another is signified, though nothing be said at all. The ancient sacrifices of the *Jews*, whether weekly, monthly, or yearly; their passover, their sitting in booths, &c. these were all sacraments; yet we find not any sacred form of words used by the priests or people, in the execution of them.

The calling upon the words of consecration in the eucharist, is then too weakly founded to be made argumentative; for the action is perfect, whether those words be used or forborne. And, in truth, to speak my opinion, I could see no great harm

harm could ensue, were they *quite omitted*. Certainly thus much good would follow, that some part (though not a little one) of the superstition that adheres to that action, by reason of an ungrounded conceit, of the necessity and force of the words in it, would forthwith peel off, and fall away. I would not be understood to prescribe for, or desire the disuse of the words; only two things I would commend, 1. That the use of the canon is a thing indifferent. 2. That in this knack of making sacraments, Christians have taken a greater liberty than they can well justify. 1st, In forging sacraments, more than God, for ought doth or ever can appear, did ever intend. 2d, In adding to the sacraments instituted of God, many formalities and ceremonial circumstances, upon no warrant but their own; which circumstances, by long use, begat in the minds of men, a conceit that they were essential parts of *that*, to which indeed they were but appendant. Thus much for the first common mistake; but the second is worse.

That these words, *the bread and wine*, after consecration, are truly and *really* the body of Christ, howsoever they are supplied and allayed with the words, not after a *carnal*, but a *spiritual* manner; yet still remain too crude and raw, and betray the speaker for a *Lutheran* at least, if not a favourer of the church of *Rome*. For as for that phrase of a spiritual manner, which seems to give season and moderation to that conclusion, it can yield but small relief. For 1st, to say the flesh of Christ is in the bread, but not after a carnal manner, is the same nonsense which the divines of *Rome* put upon us, on the like occasion; when telling us, that the blood of Christ is really sacrificed and shed in the sacrament, they add, that it is *incrumente, unbloody*. By the like analogy, they may tell us if they please,  
that



that the body of Christ is there incorporated unbodily. Flesh not carnally, may pass the press jointly, the next edition of the book of bulls.

Though I know no protestant that teacheth the common bread, after the word spoken, is really made the body of Christ, yet out of some protestant writings is occasion given to err. For generally the reformed divines do falsely report that holy action, whether we regard the essence or use thereof.

For first, if in regard of the essence, some protestants of note say, that the words of consecration are not a mere trope, [or figure,] from hence it must needs follow, that in some sense they must be taken literally; which is enough to plead authority for error. But that which they preach concerning a real presence, and participation of Christ's body in the sacrament, they expound not by a supposal that the bread becomes God's body, but that, together with the sacramental elements, there is conveyed into the soul of the worthy receiver, the very body and blood of God, but after a secret, ineffable and wonderful manner. From whence, as I take it, have proceeded those crude speeches of the learned of the reformed parts, some dead, some living; wherein they take upon them to assure the divines of *Rome*, that we acknowledge a *real presence*, as well as they. But for the manner how, *con*, or *trans*, or *sub*, or *in*, we play the sceptics, and determine not.

This conceit, besides the falsehood of it, is a mere novelty; neither is it to be found in the books of any of the ancients, till *Martin Bucer* arose. He, out of fear to seem to recede too far from the church of *Rome*, taught to the purpose now related, concerning the doctrine of Christ's presence in the sacrament; and from him it descended into the

writings of *Calvin* and *Beza* ; whose authority have well near spread it over the face of the reformed churches.

This is an error which toucheth the essence of that holy action ; but there are many which touch the end and use of it, now practised by the reformed parts. For we make it an arbitration of civil business, and employ it in ending controversies, [*and now as a qualification for places.*] And for confirmation of what we say or do, we commonly promise to take the sacrament. --- We teach it to be *viaticum morientum*, whereby we abuse many distressed consciences, and sick bodies, who seek for comfort there, and finding it not, conclude from thence (I speak what I know) some defect in the faith. The participation of this sacrament to sick and weak persons, what unseemly events hath it occasioned ? the bringing up the elements upon the receipt of them, to the interruption of the action. --- The fundamental fallacy whence these abuses sprung, was from a fancy of long subsistence in the churches, that in the communion, there is something given besides bread and wine ; but what, men have not yet agreed.

Some say, it is the body of God, into which the bread is transubstantiated ; some say, it is the same body with which the bread is consubstantiated ; some, that the bread remaining what it was, there passes with it to the soul, the *real* body of God, in a secret unknown manner ; some, that a further degree of faith is supplied us ; others, that some degree of God's grace, whatever it be, is exhibited, which otherwise would be wanting. All which conceits must needs fall out, (as having no other ground but conjecture) but weakly founded. To settle you therefore in your judgment, both of the thing itself, and of the true use of it, I will commend

mend to your consideration these few propositions.

First, in the communion there is nothing given but bread and wine. Secondly, the bread and wine are signs indeed, not of any thing there exhibited, but of somewhat long since given, even of Christ, given for us upon the cross. Thirdly, Jesus Christ is eaten at the communion table in no sense; neither *spiritually*, by virtue of any thing done there, nor really; neither metaphorically, nor literally. Indeed, that which is eaten, I mean the bread, is called Christ by a metaphor; but it is eaten truly and properly *bread*. Fourthly, the spiritual eating of Christ is common to all places, as well as the Lord's table\*. Lastly, the uses and ends of the Lord's supper can be no more than such as are mentioned in the scriptures, and they are but two. 1. The commemoration of the death and passion of the Son of God, specified by himself, at the institution of the sacrament. 2. To testify our union with Christ, and communion with one another; which end St. *Paul* hath taught us."

The reader will excuse the length of this quotation, not only in regard to the excellent judgment of this eminent divine, but also as it is the clearest, truest, and best explication of our Saviour's words,

\* What reason or necessity is there for Christians to suppose, either the bodily or spiritual presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, more than in any other ordinance of God's appointment? cannot Christians, by eating bread and drinking wine in this sacrament, commemorate with the most ardent love and affection, the sincerest gratitude and thanksgiving, God's infinite mercy and goodness, in sending his dearly beloved Son to suffer death on the cross, for the redemption of the world, without supposing any bodily or spiritual presence of Christ whatsoever in the sacrament? as well as for the *Jews* to commemorate the deliverance which God vouchsafed to their fore-fathers, by their eating of the passover; who, tho' they say, *this is the Lord's passover*, yet do not believe it to be the very same paschal lamb which was originally eaten by the *Israelites*, the night before the angel, by God's order, passed over the houses of their first-born, without destroying them with the rest.



that I have met with in any of the numerous authors perused by me, on the occasion; containing a plain and full determination of the whole point in question. And would all unprejudiced protestants abide by, and conform to, this easy and just definition and interpretation of the words used by our Lord, at the celebration of his supper, there would be an end of this controversy, and the papists would be left without excuse. But as I have promised to give the different sentiments of some of our divines on the occasion, I shall proceed to lay the same before the reader.

“ Had the primitive Christians, says archbishop *Wake*, in the before referred to discourse, p. 29. believed this great change, how comes it to pass, that we find none of those marks nor signs of it, that the world has since abounded with? no talk of accidents existing without subjects, of the senses being liable to be deceived in judging of their proper objects; in short, no philosophy corrupted to maintain this paradox? no adorations, processions, vows paid to it, as to Christ himself? It is but a little time since the *bell*\*, under *Gregory IX.* came in play, to give the people notice to fall down and worship this new god. The feast, in honour of it, instituted by *Urban IV.* is an invention of yesterday;† the adoring of it in the streets, in all probability, an hundred years later; and had not those first Christians respect sufficient for our blessed Saviour? or did they do all this? --- So far from it, that we find instances directly contrary to this belief. In some churches, (that of *Jerusalem*) they burnt what remained of the consecrated elements. In others, (that of *Constantinople*) they gave it to little children to eat. In some they bu-

\* 1240.

† 1264.

ried it with their dead. In all they permitted the communicants to carry home some remnants of them. They sent it abroad by sea, by land, from one church and village to another; without any provision of bell, or taper, canopy, or incense, or any other marks of adoration. They sometimes made poultices of the bread; they mixed their wine with ink: all which we can never imagine such holy men would have presumed to do, had they indeed believed them to be the *very body and blood* of our blessed Lord."†

As transubstantiation is contrary to the best and purest tradition of the church, so is it also to right reason. It would be endless to heap together all the contradictions that might be offered to prove this. But let us hear Mr. *Chillingworth*, a most able champion for the protestant cause, who writes thus\*. "That there should be length, and nothing long; breadth, and nothing broad; thickness, and nothing thick; whiteness, and nothing white; roundness, and nothing round; weight, and nothing heavy; sweetness, and nothing sweet; moisture, and nothing moist; fluidness, and nothing flowing; many actions, and no agent; many passions, and no patient; *i. e.* that there should be a long, broad, thick, white, round, heavy, sweet, moist, flowing, active, passive, NOTHING. That bread should be turned into the substance of Christ, and yet not any thing of the bread become any thing of Christ; neither the matter, nor the form, nor the accidents of the bread, be made either the matter, or the form, or the accidents of Christ. That bread should be turned into nothing, and at the same time, with the same action,

† *Wake's discourse, ibidem, p. 32, &c.*

\* *Chillingworth against Knst, c. 4. n. 46.*

turned into Christ, and yet Christ should not be nothing. That the same thing, at the same time, should have its just dimensions, and just distance of its parts one from another, and at the same time not have it; but all its parts together, in one and the self-same point. That the same thing, at the same time, should be wholly above its self, and wholly below its self, within its self, and without its self, on the right hand, and on the left hand, and round about its self. That the same thing, at the same time, should move to and from its self, and yet lie still; or that it should be carried from one place to another, through the middle space, and yet not move. That there should be no certainty in our senses, and yet that we should know something certainly, and yet know nothing but by our senses. That *that* which *is* and *was* long ago, should now begin to be; That *that* is now to be made of nothing, which is not nothing, but something; that the same thing should be *before* and *after* its self. These and many other of the like nature, are the unavoidable, and most of them the avowed consequences of *transubstantiation*, and I need not say all of them contradictions to right reason."

And says *Wake*,\* "The impossibilities and repugnancies extend to the very creed itself, and destroy the chiefest articles of our faith, the fundamentals of Christianity. How can that man profess that he believes our Saviour Christ to have been born 16 ages since, of the *Virgin Mary*, whose very body he sees the priest about to make now before his eyes? that he believes him to have ascended into heaven, and behold he is yet with us upon earth? There to sit on the right hand of God the

\* *Wake's discourse, ibidem, p. 34.*



Father Almighty, till in the end of the world he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and dead? and *yet* behold he is here carried through the streets, locked up in a box, adored first, and then eaten by his creatures; carried up and down in several manners, and to several places, and sometimes *lost out of a priest's pocket.*" A strange sort of a God this!

" These are no far-fetched considerations; they are the obvious consequences of this belief. And if these things are impossible, as doubtless, if there be any such thing as reason in the world, they are; I suppose it may be very much the concern of every one that professes this faith, to reflect a little upon them, and think what account must one day be given, of their persisting obstinately in a point, so evidently erroneous, that the least degree of an impartial judgment would presently have shewn them the falseness of it."

My next authority is bishop *Taylor*. This worthy prelate is very copious and particular in many of his elaborate discourses on this subject. But having been very conversant with the ancient fathers, he sometimes, in imitation of them, expresses himself after such a metaphorical or figurative manner, that some allowance ought to be made; or otherwise his writings in some parts will appear very inconsistent, and irreconcilable with his main design, in other parts of his discourses on the same subject.

" The holy communion, or supper of the Lord, Says the bishop \*, is too much untwisted and nicely handled by the writings of the doctors, and by them made more mysterious, intricate, and difficult, by explications and distinctions. --- When

\* Worthy Communicant, p. 6. 10, 11, &c.

our blessed Lord was to nail the hand-writing of ordinances to his cross, he was pleased to retain two ceremonies, baptism, and the Lord's supper, that Christians may first wash and be clean, and then eat of the supper of the Lamb ; the retention of which we can't but imagine is of great purpose and remarkable virtues. This is evident in the instance of baptism, the mystery [or virtue] of which is the foundation of religion ; for we all profess " to believe one baptism, for the remission of our " sins ;" and yet the action is external, the very mystery is by ceremony, the element is water, the minister a sinful man, and *the effect is produced OUT OF THE SACRAMENT*, in many persons and instances, as *well as* IN IT.

But concerning the other sacrament, there are more divisions, for 'tis never *expressly joined with a word of PROMISE* ; and where mentioned in the Gospel, it is named only as a duty and commandment, and not as a GRACE, or *treasure, of holy blessing*. We are bidden to do it, but *promised nothing for a REWARD*. It is commanded to us, but we are not invited to obedience, by the consideration of any SUBSEQUENT BLESSING.

\* It is strange that Christians should pertinaciously insist upon carnal significations and natural effects, in sacraments and mysteries, when our blessed Lord hath given us a sufficient light to conduct and secure us from such misapprehensions. " The flesh profiteth nothing ; the words which " I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are " life." And this one word alone was perpetually sufficient for Christ's disciples. For when, upon occasion of the gross understanding of their master's words, by the men of *Capernaum*, they

\* *Ibidem*, p. 17, 20, 21, &c.

had been once clearly taught, that the meaning of all these words was wholly spiritual, they rested there, and required no further. So that when Christ, at the institution of the supper, affirmed of the bread and wine, that they were his body and blood, they were not at all offended, as being sufficiently before instructed in the nature of that mystery. And besides they saw enough to tell them, that what they did eat was not the natural body of their Lord; *this* (that is, what they did eat) was the body which himself *did*, or *might eat*, with his body. One body did eat, and the other was eaten. Both of them were his body, but after a diverse manner; for the case is briefly thus: in the sacrament of the eucharist, the body of Christ, according to the proper signification of a human body, is not at all; but in a sense different from the proper and natural body, that is, in a sense more agreeing to sacraments.--- And when he gives us his body and blood, he does not fill our stomach with good things, but our hearts are to be replenished; and by receiving his spirit, we receive the best thing that God gives; not his lifeless body, but his flesh with life in it; that is, his doctrine and his spirit to imprint it, so as to beget a living faith, and a lively hope, that we may live, and live for ever. Again,

\* We are to consider, that Christ, besides his spiritual body and blood, did also give us his natural, and we receive that by the means of this. For *this* he gave us but once, *only* then, when upon the cross he was broken for our sins. This body could die but once, and it could be but at one place at once, and heaven was the place appointed for it, and all at once was sufficiently effected by

\* *Ibidem*, p. 33, 34, to 45.



it, which was designed in the counsel of God. --- This body being carried from us into heaven, cannot be touched or tasted by us on earth. But Christ left to us symbols and sacraments of this natural body; not to be, or to convey that natural body to us, but to do much more for us; to convey all the blessings and graces procured for us, by the breaking of that body, and the effusion of that blood: which blessings being spiritual are therefore called his body spiritually, because procured by that body which died for us; and are therefore called our food, because by them we live a new life in the spirit. --- The sacraments and the symbols, if considered in their own nature, are just such as they seem, water, and bread, and wine. They retain the names proper to their own natures. --- They are the body and blood of Christ by a figure.

—\* It cannot be the duty of faith to believe any thing against our senses. What we see and taste to be bread, what we see, and taste, and smell to be wine, no faith can engage us to believe the contrary; for, by our senses, Christianity itself, and some of the greatest articles of our belief, were known by them, who from that evidence conveyed them to us by their testimony. And if the perfection of sense was not finally to be relied upon, miracles could never be a demonstration of any strange event; for the miracle can never prove the article, unless our eyes and hands approve the miracle. And the divinity of Christ's person, his mission, and his power, could never have been proved by the resurrection, but that the resurrection was certain and evident to the eyes and hands of so many witnesses. Thus Christ to his apostles

\* *Ibidem* 172; to 1764

proved himself to be no spirit, by exposing his flesh and bones to be felt. And he wrought faith in *St. Thomas* by his fingers ends; the wounds that he saw and felt were the demonstration of his faith.

--- That therefore which we see upon our altars and tables, that which the priest handles, which the communicants do taste, is bread and wine; our senses tell us it is so, and therefore faith cannot be enjoined for us to believe it is not so. Faith gives a new life to the soul, but it does not put out our eyes; and what God hath given us in our nature, could never be intended as a snare to religion, or to engage us to believe a lie. — Whatsoever is against right reason, that no faith can oblige us to believe. --- The faith that is required of those who come to the holy communion, is of what is revealed plainly, and taught usefully; not what ministers to curiosity; that which the good and the plain, the easy and the simple man can understand.” Much more might be added from the bishop, but I hope this is sufficient,

I will now produce the sentiments of *Dr. Hammond*. “ This is my body,” says he, \* is a form of speech, substituted instead of the paschal form, “ This is the bread of affliction, which our fathers “ ate in *Egypt*.” Or, “ This is the unleavened “ bread.” Or, “ This is the passover.” Not that it is that very identical bread which they then ate, but the celebration of that anniversary feast which was then instituted. His body is in heaven, and there to be contained till the day of restitution of all things, and is not corporally brought down in every sacrament, either to be joined locally with the elements, or for them to be changed into it,

\* *Practical Catechism*, p. 402.

--- As for the elements in this sacrament, *bread* and *wine*; though by the offering them to God, then by the priest's consecration, benediction, calling upon God over them, they become God's, and so are called the Lord's supper, in opposition to every man's own supper, and so are changed from common bread and wine; yet not so as to depart from their own nature, or to be really converted into the body and blood of Christ, save only in a spiritual sense. --- For they remain after consecration in their former essence, and figure, and shape, and are visible and sensible, such as before they were." \*

And says Dr. *Sherlock*, † " Though Christ died upon the cross for us, yet he could not, in a literal sense, give us his natural flesh to eat; for he was to rise again from the dead with a glorious incorruptible body, and ascend up to heaven in the same body, and there continue to be united to this human but glorified body, till he return again to judge the world. Though Christ be present in all places, yet his body, however glorious and perfect, is still matter, and therefore confined at one place, and cannot be the same time at *Rome* and *Constantinople*, nor in 10,000 places at once. And this sacrament is to be celebrated, his flesh eat, and his blood drank, so long as the church and the world lasts. But it is contrary to the nature of a body to be so often eat, and yet continue the same body; and was the thing possible, it would be an inhuman barbarous rite, to eat the flesh of a man, and of a friend.

Christ instituted the sacrament of his body and blood, that is bread and wine, to be eat and drank, as the symbols and signs of his body and blood;

\* Comment. on *Mat.* xxvi. 26.

† Religious assemblies, p. 344, &c.



and the bread and wine are called his body and blood, because feeding on the bread and wine are called his body and blood; and that bread and wine, in obedience to his institution, and in remembrance of his death and passion, do, to all intents and purposes, as much intitle us to the merits, atonement, and all the blessings of the new covenant purchased by his death; as eating the flesh of the sacrificed lamb did the *Jews*, to the virtue of that sacrifice whereof they did eat; which is all the church of *England* means by the real presence. Again,

There is not one word in scripture to prove any one part of the doctrine of transubstantiation; neither that the natural flesh and blood of Christ is in the sacrament; nor that the substance of bread and wine does not remain after consecration; Nor yet the accidents of bread and wine, such as colour, smell, taste, quantity, weight, subsist without any substance, or subject to subsist in. --- Again, transubstantiation is no Gospel doctrine, because it overthrows the very fundamental principle of knowledge, and is a direct contradiction to the design of the Gospel, which is to advance divine knowledge to the utmost perfection. There is nothing more contrary to the natural notions we have of things, than transubstantiation. For if this doctrine be true, then the same individual body of Christ is in heaven, at the right hand of God, and on 10,000 altars, at a great distance from each other, at the same time. Then a human body is contracted into the compals of a wafer, or rather subsists without any dimensions, without extension of parts, and independent on place." \*

\* Preservative against popery, p. 93.

Dr. *Horneck*, a celebrated divine, writes thus on this subject \*. “ Transubstantiation, says he, is the darling doctrine of the church of *Rome*; a word first brought in by passion and ignorance, defended afterwards with bloody zeal, and made an article of faith by the packt council of *Trent*. A word that would have been long since banished and rejected, had it not been owned by men, who will rather hazard all, than own themselves in an error. A word which that corrupted church fights for, anathematizes, curses, and damns to the pit of hell, all that dissent from their sense and meaning in that barbarous expression. By transubstantiation they mean a conversion or change of the whole substance of bread and wine in this sacrament, into the substance of Christ’s natural body, immediately upon the priest’s pronouncing, *this is my body*. --- But ’tis impossible that these words should infer any such change of the bread into real and substantial flesh. For then it would follow that Christ had said what is false, and the disciples that were present might have easily convinced themselves of the contrary, having before seen many miracles of Christ’s wrought. And had there been one wrought in this sacrament, they would doubtless have examined it by their senses; and having seen no real conversion or change of the bread before them into his natural body, would have disputed Christ’s assertion, and given him an account of the reason of their unbelief. For they had seen the miracles of his changing water into wine, which, by their taste and eyesight, convinced them there was a real change: and had there been such a change made, can any one suppose they would have been silent? They saw Christ sitting at the

\* *Crucified Jesus*, p. 127, &c.

table ; they saw the bread in his hand, and the bread after consecration ; they saw that his body and bread were different things ; they did not see him vanish out of their sight, but both Christ and the bread continued as they were ; and therefore could not but take these words in a spiritual sense. There never was any miracle wrought but what was intended to convince the senses of men, so as to taste, see, smell, feel, or hear it ; nay, the design of a miracle is clearly lost, if it does not convince the senses.

And if we must not believe our senses, what assurance have we of our religion ? or how can any one be sure the words, *this is my body*, are in the bible, if he must not believe his eyesight ? *that*, of what Christ affirms it is his body, was the bread he took in his hand, or that which he broke. And this may several ways be said to be his body, without being changed or transubstantiated into it : for what is more common, in all countries and languages, than to say, such a man is an old fox ; or such an one is a lion ; or such a neighbour is a beast ; and such a boy is a tiger ? but who infers from hence, that either of them is transubstantiated into the one, or the other ? Indeed, transubstantiation is what neither the scripture, nor the primitive church, did ever acknowledge. A doctrine contrary to all sense and reason, full of contradictions and absurdities.

If we would explain scripture by scripture, and compare this expression with others not unlike it, we shall easily discover in what sense the bread in this sacrament is the body of Christ. “ This “ is my body,” that is, this *bread* is a significant emblem, sign, or figure of my body : or this bread, thus broken, represents my body, that is to be crucified for the sins of the world. — That Christ’s



crucified body is here meant, all Christians agree ; the only difference is, how the bread is Christ's body ? and how Christ's body is present in the sacrament ? we say, it is there spiritually, as the bread is a symbol, figure, sign, representation, and memorial of Christ's body, which was offered for the sins of the world. And this interpretation is so easy, so intelligible, so agreeable to sacramental expressions, and to the analogy of faith, that one would think it impossible for men to contradict it, unless they are determined to defend an opinion, right or wrong, because it is their interest to do it."

Bishop *Patrick* also declares \*, " That the bread and wine remain bread and wine after the sanctifying them ; they are bread and wine in their substance, and the body and blood of Christ in the spiritual use to which they are appointed." And, says bishop *Fleetwood* †, " the church of *England* knows no bodily presence, nor any change of the bread and wine into the natural body and blood of Christ. --- The real presence maintained by *her*, is not the presence of Christ's natural body, but of his spiritual and mystical one. --- To say the bread and wine, after consecration, become the true natural body and blood of Christ, is to destroy the very nature of the sacrament, and to make the sign to be the thing signified. For if the bread and wine be substantially changed into the body and blood of Christ, then is the sign lost, because there is no bread and wine remaining ; which is not only contrary to sense, but to the nature of a sacrament, which is made up of an outward and visible sign, as well as of an inward and spiritual grace. As therefore, in the sacrament of baptism, the water remains still true and natural water, after its

\* Christian sacrifice, p. 57.

† Rational communicant, p. 14, 16, &c.

sanctification to the mystical washing away of sin ; so do the creatures of bread and wine remain still true and natural bread and wine, after the consecration of them to the end and use appointed by Christ our Saviour."

Archbishop *Tillotson*, it is well known, wrote a tract against transubstantiation. " That doctrine, says he \*, is not a controversy of scripture against scripture, or of reason against reason, but of downright impudence, against the plain meaning of scripture, and all the sense and reason of mankind. --- For transubstantiation cannot be true, unless our senses, and the senses of all mankind, be deceived about their proper objects. And if this be true and certain, then nothing else can be so ; for if we are not certain of what we see, we can be certain of nothing.

--- Is it possible to conceive, that our Saviour did literally hold himself in his hand, and give away himself from himself, with his own hands ? *St. Paul* says, " We being one, are one bread, and one body, " for we are partakers of that one bread : " the church of *Rome* may as well argue from hence, that all Christians are substantially changed first into bread, and then into the natural body of Christ, by their participation of the sacrament, because they are thereby said to be one bread, and one body †."

" As our Saviour, after the consecration of the cup, and delivering it to his disciples to drink of it, tells them that he would thenceforth drink no

\* *Serm. fol. vol. 1. p. 297, &c.*

† And our Lord not only baptized with water to repentance, but with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, *Mat. iii. 11.* But does any one believe that the water was then changed into the Holy Ghost, or into fire ? Suppose our Saviour, when he instituted the Lord's supper, had said, *this is my passion*, or *this is my death* ; instead of *this is my body*, *this is my blood* : would any one have thought that the bread and wine were changed into his passion and death ?

more of that fruit of the vine, which he had now drank with them, till after his resurrection; it is plain from thence, that it was the fruit of the vine, *real wine*, which our Saviour drank of, and communicated to his disciples, in the sacrament. And if we consider that he celebrated this sacrament before his passion, 'tis impossible these words should be understood literally, of the natural body and blood of Christ; because it was his body broken, and blood shed, which he gave to his disciples: which if we understand literally of his natural body broken, and his blood shed, then these words, "this is my body which is broken, and this is my blood which is shed," could not be true; because his body was then whole and unbroken, and his blood not then shed. Nor could the disciples understand these words literally, because they not only plainly saw that what he gave them was bread and wine, but also, that it was not his body which was given, but his body which gave that which was given. Not his body broken and his blood shed, because they saw him alive at that very time, and beheld his body whole and unpierced; and therefore could not understand these words literally.\*

The real ground of this doctrine is to magnify the power of the priests, in being able to work so great a miracle. This, with great pomp and pride, is often urged by them, as a transcendent instance of the divine wisdom, to find out so admirable a way to raise the power and reverence of the priest, that he should be able, whenever he pleases, by repeating a few words, to work so miraculous a change, (and as they love most absurdly and blasphemously to speak) as to *make God him-*

\* If our Saviour drank of the wine, and which the papists say, was changed into his blood, then he must drink his own blood, and his disciples must do the same. A thought this the monstrous and absurd!



*self*\*. But in truth there is no miracle wrought in transubstantiation ; for neither in scripture, nor in profane authors, nor in common use of speech, is any thing called a miracle, but what falls under the notice of our senses ; a miracle being nothing else but a supernatural effect, evident to sense. That transubstantiation then should really be wrought, and yet no sign and appearance of it, is a thing wonderful, but not to sense ; for our senses perceive no change, the bread and wine in the sacrament, to all our senses, remaining just as before ; and there can be no wonder in this. Indeed, we may wonder to see a strange thing done ; but no man wonders when he sees nothing done : any man may every day work 10,000 such miracles, if he hath but the confidence to face men down that he does it. So that the doctrine of transubstantiation is monstrously absurd, and of infinite scandal to the christian religion."

\* " By slow degrees, transubstantiation was enacted into an article of faith, and a very beneficial one to the priests ; since it made them the makers of God, and a sort of Gods among the people. --- But it was not ignorance, nor stupidity, but the most subtle and crafty politic, that produced transubstantiation. Thence the awful pomp, the august cavalcades in the processions of the hostie ; thence the presence of God continually resident corporeal at the high altar ; thence to exhibit it perpetually there, the wafer, unleavened unfermented bread, was taken into the solemnity, both against ancient practice, and the perpetual custom of the *Greek* church ; because common bread would soon have grown mouldy, and not pass with the palate of the multitude for the body of God. Thence, at last, in the 13th century, was the cup denied to the laity ; not for not seeing the plain words of the scripture, *drink ye ALL of this* ; not for the dearth or scarcity of wine, which is cheap and common in those climates ; nor for the then pretended reason, that the mustachos, or whiskers, in the mode of that age, used to dip into the holy cup ; but because it was inconsistent with the rest of the show. So small a quantity of wine, even after consecration, would soon grow dead and vapid, and discover its true nature, if tasted after long standing. The wine therefore, because it interferes with the standing ceremony, and continued pageantry of transubstantiation, has not the honour to be repositied with the wafer on the altar, nor to accompany it in the procession." *Bentley's Sermon before the university of Cambridge, November 5th, 1715, p. 21, 22.*

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“ It is a severe saying of *Averroes*, the *Arabian* philosopher, (who lived after this doctrine was entertained among Christians) and ought to make the church of *Rome* blush if she can. “ I have travelled, says he, over the world, and have found divers sects ; but so sottish a sect, or law, I never found, as is the sect of Christians ; because with their own teeth they devour that God whom they worship.” To speak the plain truth, the christian religion was never so horribly exposed to the scorn of atheists and infidels, as it hath been, by this most absurd and senseless doctrine ; and which, supposing it true, must also bring a great scandal upon our religion, upon account of the real barbarousness of literally eating the flesh of the Son of man, and drinking his blood ; and which is no way extenuated by its being done under the species of bread and wine, because they acknowledge, and do believe, that they verily eat and drink, ‘ the natural flesh and blood of Christ.’ And how can any man possibly use his friend more barbarously and unworthily, than to feast upon his living flesh and blood ? It is amazing that any one should put upon our Saviour’s words, so easily capable of a more convenient sense, a meaning so plainly contrary to reason, sense, and even humanity. Had the ancient Christians owned any such doctrine, we should have heard of it from the adversaries of our religion in every page of their writings. And they would have desired no greater advantages against the Christians, than to upbraid them with their feeding upon the natural flesh and blood of their Lord, and their God, and their best friend. But that no such thing was then objected by the heathens to the Christians, is, to a wise man, a full demonstration that no such doctrine was then be-

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lieved :

lieved: a doctrine also contrary to Christianity, on account of its cruel and bloody consequences."

And if this doctrine be not true, and no such change as they pretend made in the sacrament, then they worship a creature instead of the Creator, God blessed for evermore, and are guilty of idolatry. That such a change is impossible I have shewn; or, could it be, yet as they can never be certain that it is, because that depends upon the intention of the priest, they must be always in danger of idolatry: and, besides the infinite scandal of this doctrine, the monstrous absurdities of it are such, as to render it insupportable to any religion to be believed."

Much to the same purpose writes Dr. *Trap*; \*  
 " That the bread and wine in the eucharist should, says he, by the consecration of the priest, be changed into the true and real body and blood of Christ, is contrary to scripture, to reason, and to our senses; and the uses made of the doctrine of transubstantiation are idolatrous and blasphemous in themselves, scandalous to our holy religion, and to be abhorred by all Christians. Our Saviour, it is true, did affirm of the bread, that it was his body, and of the wine, that it was his blood; notwithstanding which, the doctrine of transubstantiation is contrary to scripture, and to that very text on which they build it. --- " This is my body " which is given or broken, --- This is my blood " which is shed." Now if our Saviour meant this in a literal sense, it was not true; for his body was not yet given or broken, nor his blood yet shed. He must therefore mean it figuratively, and consequently the doctrine of transubstantiation is false: and indeed, 'tis impossible that these words of our

\* *Trap's popery truly stated*, p. 93, to 97.



Saviour should be taken literally; for could the bread which lay upon the table be his real body, when his real body was sitting before it? could the wine be his real blood, when his real blood was in his veins? could he, with his own hands, give away himself? give himself to himself, as well as to others? eat himself, and drink himself? And had not the apostles understood the words as we do, they who upon other occasions were so very inquisitive, and sometimes incredulous, would doubtless have said; Lord how can this bread and wine be thy body and blood? but they were too wise to ask so impertinent a question, the thing being plain to common sense at first hearing. They had heard their master use much harsher and more obscure similitudes, and yet very well understood him: but this is so easy and obvious a one, that it is frequently used, even by the vulgar, in common discourse: so that when our Saviour said, *this is my body, this is my blood*, he meant these are the signs, symbols, representations, of my body and blood. --- Besides, if the consecrated elements be his real body and blood, he has innumerable bodies at the same time; or, his one body is in innumerable places at the same time? The first is monstrously absurd; the second a flat contradiction; and both impossible.

Another argument is the testimony of our senses. It is not, it cannot be as our adversaries say it is; because we see, feel, smell, and taste the contrary. If we cannot believe our eyes, we can be sure of nothing; and then Christianity will lose the great evidence upon which it is established; I mean that of miracles. For what is working a miracle, but an appeal to our senses? If we cannot be sure that what we see is what it appears to be, to what purpose do we or they read and quote the scriptures?

how do we know that these words, *this is my body*, are really there? In short, either we must believe our senses, or we must not. If we must, the elements in the eucharist are certainly bread and wine, not a human body and blood. If we must not, we cannot prove there are any such words in the bible, as *this is my body*; upon which, tho' falsely, the doctrine we are considering is founded. So that transubstantiation destroys itself, as well as the scriptures, and the christian religion."

I will next give you the opinion of the honest and intrepid *Samuel Johnson*, who had the courage and resolution to oppose this, and other doctrines of the church of *Rome*, in the reign of *James II.* and for which he suffered greatly, both by scourgings, and other cruelties, though he was afterwards rewarded by the protestant King *William*, the deliverer of this nation from popery and arbitrary power.

\* " Among other contradictions which attend, says he, the doctrine of transubstantiation, are those which relate to time. Every thing now in being, either always had a being, and is eternal, which God only is, or else it had a beginning of its being, in which it has continued ever since; which is the condition of all creatures. And this continuance of a creature in being, we call the duration of it, which is so essential to all substances, whether material or immaterial, that it is absolutely inseparable from them. For when their being began, their duration began; and when their duration ceases, their being ceases. --- Let us then try by this test, whether it be not absolutely impossible for the transubstantiation body in the sacra-

\* *Samuel Johnson's impossibility of transubstantiation demonstrated*, p. 8. published in 1688.

ment, to be the very body of Christ, which was born of the Virgin *Mary*.

This body has continued in being 1688 years; whereas the body which the priest made yesterday, has continued in being but one day. But the duration of one day only, cannot be the duration of 1688 years; and the duration of 1688 years is now inseparable from the body of Christ, born of the Virgin *Mary*; which was to be demonstrated. Again, if the body in the sacrament, which is made, or began to be yesterday, is the same body which has continued 1688 years, then the same body continued 1687 years and upwards before it began to be; but before it began to be, it was not in being; and consequently, in every minute during that 1687 years, the same body was in being, and was not in being; which supposes numberless contradictions \*."

" It appears by the very words of consecration, *this is my body*, that the priest himself is also transubstantiated; for the body is Christ's, and yet the priest says, *it is my body*, which cannot be true, unless Christ and the priest be the same. --- But say the papists, there is no such change at all, for the priest only stands for Christ, and sustains his person; he only represents Christ in the action, and is in Christ's stead: and therefore the priest may say with truth, *this is my body*, tho' literally, and properly, and in strictness of speech, it is Christ's body, and not his. To which I reply; that this is the very exposition of these words of our Saviour, for which the heretics have all along been burnt; namely, this bread (says Christ) stands for my body, and represents it in this action; it is in stead of my body, and bears the character of it; and you

\* *Ibidem*, p. 9.



are not so much to consider it as bread, but to look upon it as the representation of my body, which is given for you ; and therefore, with truth I can say, it is my body, though literally, and properly, and in strictness of speech, it is bread, and not my natural body. Let the papists therefore give or take ; either the bread is not transubstantiated, or, if it be, by virtue of the self same words, the priest is transubstantiated too. --- For there is not one word which the papists have said, in behalf of the bread being transubstantiated, but holds as strongly for the priest's being transubstantiated \*."

Bishop *Stillingsfleet*, whose excellent writings against popery are held in the highest esteem by protestants, and no less dreaded by papists, for his solid reasoning and convincing arguments against them, has, in many of his judicious treatises, so amply confuted the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation, that it would trespass too much on the reader's patience, to make many extracts from him on the present occasion. I will therefore only quote the following very pertinent and sensible paragraph : Speaking of protestants, he says, " Alas † for us ! we do not account it any piece of devotion to believe nonsense and contradictions, such as the doctrine of transubstantiation implies. We know not what devotion there can be in opposing a plain institution of Christ ; and not merely in leaving the people at liberty to receive in one or both kinds, but in prohibiting the far greatest part of Christians to receive as Christ appointed. We know not what devotion there can lie in worshipping a piece of bread for the Son of God ; and believing, when a wafer is taken

\* *Ibidem*, p. 46.

† A discourse on idolatry, edit. 3. p. 459, &c.

into our mouths, *that God himself is personally entered under our roof.* O horrible devotion and detestable superstition! to give the same adoration to a wafer which we do to the eternal God; and to believe Christ to go down as personally into our bellies, as ever he went up and down when he was upon earth."

My next authority is the learned *Whitby*, who, in many of his elaborate writings, bore testimony against the idolatry (and other errors) of the church of *Rome*, and in particular as it respected the doctrine of transubstantiation. Says he, \* "That body which was broken for us, that blood which was shed for us, before the passion of our Saviour, could not be literally and naturally his broken body, and his blood shed for the remission of our sins, unless mankind was actually redeemed before the passion of the Lord, which it is blasphemy to assert; since then his future passion must have been vain and needless. Moreover, if Christ's body be represented as broken and lifeless, and his blood as shed forth, and severed from his body, and it be most certain, that there were no such things then really existent; then must it follow necessarily, that our Lord did not mean by saying, *this is my body* broken, *this is my blood* shed for you, that they were properly and literally, but only sacramentally so." --- He then adds, from an excellent treatise called *The funeral of the Mass*, p. 2, 3. as follows. "If Christ, by saying *this is my body*, &c. had meant the substantial conversion of the bread into his body, he had spoken contrary to the common usage of the world, for there was never any author, either sacred or profane, that made use of such words as these, *this is my body*, to signify the real

\* Absurdity and idolatry of host worship, appendix, p. 12, &c.

presence of the thing immediately after pronouncing of them, and not before; on the contrary, there was never any man that did not use them to signify that the thing was already that which it was said to be. For example, when God the Father, speaking of Christ, saith, *this is my beloved Son*, it is certain that *Jesus* was the Son of God before God said it; and, in common usage, it is never said, this is that, except the thing be so before it be said to be so. For example, we do not say, *this is a table*, before that thing which we demonstrate by the word *this*, be a table; therefore it is contrary to the common stile of all authors, as well sacred as profane, and contrary to the common usage of all men, to make these words of Jesus Christ, *this is my body*, to signify the substantial conversion of the bread into Christ's body, and the real presence of his body in the host, immediately after the pronouncing of them by the priest, and not before. Again,

“ That bread should be, without a figure, the body of our Lord, it must be possible that bread and the body of our Lord may be but one and the same thing: for if they be two different things, it implies a contradiction that one should be the other properly, and without a figure; for this were to say they were, and they were not, two different things at the same time. Now there being the greatest difference betwixt these two substances, that of bread, and the body of a man, it is impossible they should be one and the same thing; it therefore is impossible, that what is bread should be the body of our Lord, without a figure.” I hope enough has been said to shew the sentiments of this learned writer.

Let us now hear what that able divine archbishop *Sharp* says on this subject: almost every one  
knows



knows the share this great man had in opposing the torrent of popery, during the reign of *James II.* and his seventh volume of sermons will ever remain an undeniable testimony of his great knowledge and judgment in that controversy.

\* “ There never was, says he, any mystery in any religion in the world, so unintelligible, so unconceivable, so contradictory, so every way both against sense and reason, as transubstantiation is. No *Jew*, no *Turk*, no pagan, so far as we can learn from history, ever had in their creeds an article so hard to be believed. If this had been the doctrine of our blessed Lord and his apostles, sure he had never drawn the world over to his religion; but even his disciples would have done as they of *Capernaum* did, when they took his saying about eating his flesh, and drinking his blood in a literal sense, they would have departed from him.

The great if not the only argument of the *Romanists* for transubstantiation, is our Saviour's words when he instituted the sacrament, which they think so full for the conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, that they wonder any protestant can deny it. --- To which I answer, all protestants do firmly believe that when Christ spake these words, “ this is my body,” he spake nothing but what was both true and very plain, and obvious. --- But we say, and are ready to prove, that they not only make nothing for transubstantiation, but quite overthrow it; that the sense which protestants expound them in is far the plainest and easiest, the most natural and proper; nay, that 'tis impossible they should be expounded otherwise.

\* Sermons, vol. vii. p. 272, &c.

The true way to find out the meaning of our Saviour's proposition, *this is my body*, will be to fix the sense of the two terms, or what he means by *this*, and what by his body. \* When we use the word *this*, in our speech, every one knows, that we, as with the finger, point to something that is present, which we would those to whom we speak to take notice of. If I have a bible in my hand, and say, holding it to you, 'this is the word of God;' would not all think I spoke of the book which I had in my hand, and shewed you? certainly they would. When our Saviour therefore said to his disciples, 'this is my body,' he meant to shew them something that was present; and ac-

\* "It is confessed, says archbishop Wake, by the greatest authors of the church of Rome, that if the relative *this*, in that proposition, *this is my body*, refers to that bread which our Saviour Christ held in his hand at the time when he spoke these words, the natural repugnancy there is between the two things affirmed of one another, *bread* and *Christ's body*, will necessarily require the figurative interpretation. 'For it is impossible,' says Gratian, that bread should be the body of Christ.' 'It cannot be,' says Bellarmine, that that proposition should be true, the former part whereof designeth bread, the latter the body of Christ. So that if the sense be, this bread is the body of Christ, either it must be taken figuratively thus, this bread signifies the body of Christ, or it is plainly absurd and impossible.' The whole difficulty therefore consists in this, whether our Saviour Christ, when he said *this is my body*, meant any thing else to be his *body*, than that bread which was before him.

Now for this, the connexion of his discourse seems to us an evident demonstration: Our Saviour Christ "took bread, and gave thanks, "and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, take, eat, this is "my body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me." Luke xxii. 19. For what did he demonstrate here and say was his body, but that which he gave to his disciples? what did he give to his disciples, but that which he brake? what brake he but that which he took? and St. Luke says expressly, he took bread. What Jesus took in his hands, that he blessed; what he blessed, the same he brake, and gave to his disciples; what he gave to his disciples, of that he said, *this is my body*. But Jesus, says the text, took bread; of the bread therefore he said, *this is my body*. So necessarily do both the words themselves, and even the confession of papists, lead us to the exposition which we make of them. Wake's exposition of the doctrine of the church of England, p. 46, 47.

cordingly we find, that he had something in his hand, and which was bread. The Lord *Jesus*, after supper took bread ; he blessed this bread, he breaks this bread, after he had blessed it ; he gives this bread to his disciples, after he had broken it ; he bids them take and eat of this bread ; and then adds, *this is my body*. Now, according to the common language of mankind, what is it that our Saviour saith is his *body* ? must it not be what he had in his hand, which he had blessed, broken, and bid them eat of ? If any thing can be concluded from words, it is impossible the apostles should understand him otherwise. And if we enquire of St. *Paul* what it is that is eaten in the holy supper, he will inform us plainly, no less than three times, that it is bread. “ As often as ye eat this bread, “ and drink this cup. Whosoever shall eat this “ bread, and drink this cup unworthily. Let a “ man examine himself, and so let him eat this “ bread, and drink this cup.” (1 Cor. xi. 26, 27, &c.) As then our Lord, having consecrated the bread, bids his disciples eat of it, telling them it was his body, so St. *Paul* also saith, that what is eaten in the sacrament is bread ; from hence it undeniably follows, that the consecrated bread is that which our Saviour calls his body. And that when he saith, ‘ this is my body,’ it is as if he had said, ‘ this bread which I have blessed and broken, and ‘ which I give you, this bread is my body.’

Let us now proceed to the other term in our Saviour’s proposition, ‘ my body.’ And this is as clear from our Saviour’s words as the former we have been speaking of. Indeed the *Romanists* darken the sense of this proposition, by leaving out half of it. They break off at ‘ this is my body ;’ but the entire sense of it is, ‘ this is my body given for you ;’ or ‘ this is my body broken for you.’ So that our  
Saviour



Saviour speaks here of ' his body as given for us ;' that is, as offered up to God, in sacrifice for us. ' His body broken for us,' that is, deprived of life for our sakes. Christ never said simply of the bread, ' this is my body,' but ' this is my body, ' given, or broken for you.' That is, the bread in the communion is his body, not living, but dead in our stead ; nor was the cup in any other sense his blood, than as it was shed for the remission of sins. So that the main question between us and the papists is, in what sense our Saviour said of the consecrated bread, that it was ' his dead body.' They contend for a literal sense : we say our Saviour here speaks by a figure, but yet one so common, that all, upon pronouncing the words, may easily understand. They would have us understand our Saviour (for instance) as if one, pointing to the king's person, should say, ' this is the king.' We understand it, as if one having the king's picture in his hand, should say, ' this is the king.' The proposition is the same in the mouth of both, but of different significations, as it is spoken by the one or other. Whether of these senses come nearer to the truth, or to our Saviour's meaning, the literal, or the figurative, theirs, or ours, we are now to examine : but as we have already proved, that when our Saviour said, ' this is my body,' he spoke of the bread ; and when he said the bread was his body, he spoke of his body not living, but sacrificed for our redemption ; From hence the two following consequences will be evident : 1st. That their sense of the words, and by which alone they can prove transubstantiation, is impossible, full of nonsense and contradictions. 2. That the sense in which protestants understand our Saviour's words, is very natural, easy, and agreeable to the common way

way of speaking ; and the only sense in which the apostles could possibly understand them.

If we take our Saviour's words in the literal sense, as the *Romanists* do, we must make him speak to this effect. " This bread which I have blessed and broken, and commanded you to eat, is not bread, but really and truly my dead body ; my body sacrificed for you." But I will appeal to all, whether this be not perfect nonsense ; nor could his disciples thus understand him. For this is to make our Saviour say, and unsay, the same thing, at the same time. He speaks of the bread which he had blessed and broken, when he pronounced the word *this*, and they all knew it to be bread ; and yet the *Romanists* suppose him to mean that it was not bread, but merely his body : for they say, when once it becomes the body of Christ, it is no longer bread. Indeed they pretend, in answer to this, that when our Saviour spoke the word *this*, that what he had in his hand, or then gave them to eat, was bread ; but as soon as he finished his sentence, then it was no longer bread, but his very body. But this is to make our Saviour speak not only against the rules of grammar, but to speak a flat untruth ; for he says, in the present tense, this *bread* is my *body*, and yet when he begun to speak so, the bread was not his body, but was presently to be turned into his body. If indeed he had said, this bread *will be* my body, as soon as I have done speaking these words, he then might have been supposed to have spoken something to the purpose of transubstantiation. But he speaks in the present time, *this is*, not *this will be*. And if they will be bold to change the tenses, then they keep not to the letter of the words, and have recourse to a figure ; a figure far more unusual in these kind of speeches, than what we contend is here

here made use of. So that our Saviour's words, *this is my body*, cannot possibly be taken in a literal sense, without making him to speak either a contradiction, or that which is false ; unless that bread and our Saviour's body, are one and the same thing, which no man yet ever asserted.

But let us suppose, as they would have us, that when Christ had said these words ; ' this is my ' body,' that which he had in his hands was no longer bread, but became his very body ; yet there is still this question, how could it be his dead body ? his body given, or broken, or sacrificed for them ? I have already shewn, that our Saviour spoke of his body in that condition only, and that his disciples must so understand him. But if they did, how is it possible they should understand his words in a literal sense ? Christ said to them, ' this ' is my body ;' not my body living, but my body dead, and broken for you. His disciples saw and knew he was alive ; that his body was not yet broken, nor his blood shed : now if they understood his words literally, they must admit of as gross a contradiction as ever was put upon mankind. They must believe that his body was both alive and dead at the same time ; if they did not believe this, as certainly they could not, then they could not take our Saviour's words in a literal sense ; viz. that the bread he gave them was really and truly, and without any figure, his very dead body. If they did not take them in a literal sense, then it is certain they understood him in a figurative, which is what protestants contend for : which figurative sense, is in itself, both natural, easy, and unexceptionable.

The sentiments of Dr. Atterbury being very pertinent to the present occasion, I could not omit  
laying



laying them before the reader.\* “ If, says he, we consider the nature of a sacrament, it will appear, that the elements are not converted into the real body and blood of Christ; for a sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible grace. But what need is there of a visible sign of that which is present? if the body and blood of Christ are present in the sacrament, then where is the sign of it? Besides, it must be that body which was crucified, and that blood which was poured out upon the cross; because the end of celebrating this sacrament is the remembrance of Christ’s death and passion; and if so, how could our Saviour, when he gave the sacrament to his disciples, before his passion, give them his crucified body? — And there is nothing more absurd in its consequences, or that gives more offence to heathens and infidels, than that the most sacred of our most religious rites should be eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of a man. The *Egyptians* were the scoff and laughing-stock of the rest of the world, for worshipping the leeks and onions which grew in their gardens: but certainly those christians are more brutish and stupid, who first pretend to make their God, then fall down and adore him, and then eat him; nay, that affirm, not only, that the whole body of Christ, and the whole mass of his blood, is in every crumb of bread, and in every drop of the wine, but even the divinity too; and that CHRIST HIMSELF RECEIVED IT †, when he celebrated his last supper with his disciples, as ’tis plainly taught by the council of *Trent*. These are such monstrous absurdities, that one would think no reasonable man

\* Dr. *Atterbury*’s practical discourses, p. 203.

† N. B. According to this, Christ eat himself, and his own divinity too.

could

could believe them, did not experience convince us of the contrary."

If our Saviour's disciples did eat their Lord's body, and drink his blood, when he instituted this sacrament, then, like so many canibals, they devoured their Lord alive. And if so, how can the same identical body be afterwards crucified on the cross, be buried, and then rise again from the dead, and ascend into heaven, as is testified and declared by the apostles? all which must be a mere fiction, if they had before eaten Christ's body, and drank his blood. For he could not be devoured by his apostles, and yet his body be whole and alive at the same time; then die, and act over the several parts before-mentioned.

"The doctrine of transubstantiation, says the ingenious Dr. Rogers\*, as affirmed by the church of *Rome*, appears to me, and, if there be any truth in human perceptions, must appear to every one, a manifest falsehood. If they convince me that this doctrine is really affirmed in the Gospel, they oblige me to conclude that the Gospel is not a divine revelation. --- I must then either disbelieve the revelation, or reject this exposition of theirs, which subverts the authority of that revelation, and teaches me to believe, that God has affirmed in it what I manifestly perceive to be false; and if I believe these scriptures to be a divine revelation, I must either reject the words alleged, as no part of them, or reject this sense as not intended in them; and consequently, with the same certainty that I believe the Gospel revelation, I must disbelieve the infallibility of the church of *Rome* in this exposition of it.

\* Rogers's reasons against conversion to the church of *Rome*, p. 19, 20, 21.

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The words *this is my body*, I confess, are in scripture; and if the proposition which they affirm in their literal force had not been a manifest falsehood, I should readily assent to them in that sense; neither should I want an infallible interpreter to construe them to me. But while I acknowledge the divine authority of this scripture, I cannot, upon any pretence of infallibility, admit a sense of it subversive of their authority; and consequently, if I will believe this scripture to be a divine revelation, I must find some other sense of it than what the church of *Rome* gives me. And if another exposition assigns an easy natural sense to these words of Christ, agreeable to an usual way of speaking, and to all the purposes of that religion he came to establish, and which acquits the scripture from all objection on account of these words, I must, if I will act rationally, prefer this expositor, how fallible soever, to one who, under pretence of infallibility, requires me to understand them in a sense inconsistent with their being a divine revelation.\*

“ Suppose a man, holding a stone in his hand, should affirm, *this stone is a fish*. If I understand him in a literal sense, he must appear to affirm a manifest falsehood; and if an angel from heaven should come down to attest his assertion, I could not, for the reasons before given, believe it. But if that stone was carved into the figure of a fish, his words would be true in a plain obvious sense, and I should, without difficulty, assent to them. And if I was not present, but received the report of his speech and action from two persons, one of which told me he infallibly knew the mind of the speaker, and was sure it was his intention to affirm that the stone in his hand was a real living fish;

\* Ibidem, p. 35 to 37.



the other only satisfied me, that the stone was carved into the figure of a fish ; if I was convinced of the man's veracity who held the stone, and spake the words, I should certainly conclude that his meaning was only figurative, how positive soever my infallible interpreter might be of the contrary.

When our Saviour tells *Nicodemus* ' a man ' must be born again ;' if we understand the words literally as he did, that a man must enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born ; this must appear incredible, impossible, and take away all authority from the person affirming it. But if we understand the words figuratively, as signifying a spiritual regeneration, all difficulties vanish, and the expression becomes easy and intelligible ; and the matter affirmed very consistent with the character of a teacher sent from God. So when our Lord says, --- " Take, eat, this is my body ;" and of the cup, " Drink ye all of it, for this is my " blood in the New Testament, which is shed for " you, --- do this in remembrance of me." If we understand him, in these words and actions, as instituting an ordinance to be perpetually observed in his church, in commemoration of that sacrifice he was about to offer on the cross ; and teaching us by them, that as they who eat of the sacrifices under the law in which he was prefigured, communicated in the benefits and propitiation of them, so they who should eat this bread, and drink this wine, consecrated according to his appointment, should as effectually partake of the benefits of his sacrifice, as if they had materially eaten and drank that body and blood he was going to offer : that in this spiritual and sacramental sense, they should be verily and indeed his body and blood, no longer to be considered as common ordinary bread and wine, but revered as holy symbols of his body

and blood, which the co-operation of his spirit should render a most efficacious means of grace to the worthy receiver. In this view the sense of the words is easy, natural, free from all difficulty or absurdity, and most consistent with the scheme and intention of the christian religion, and therefore we may safely admit this sense, whether the expositor that gives it be infallible or not. But whether this be the full precise import of these words or not, yet ; with the same certainty that we believe the divine inspiration of the speaker, we are assured that so manifest a falsehood as the doctrine of transubstantiation, so gross, so palpable a contradiction to sense and reason, as that the bread and wine are really and sensibly the flesh and blood of Christ, broken by the hands of the priest, and ground by the teeth of the faithful, cannot be the sense of them ; and consequently, that the church of *Rome*, who affirms this doctrine to be the sense of them, cannot be a *true church*, or an *infallible expositor of scripture*."

"One would suppose, says Dr. *Stebbing* \*, that of all other questions between us and the church of *Rome*, this [of transubstantiation] should be most easily settled, because the subject matter of it falls under the cognizance of our senses. If a man should shew me a piece of wood, and ask me if it was not iron or brass ; I examine it by my senses, I answer without hesitation that it is wood, and not brass or iron : so, when a papist tells you, that the bread and wine, after consecration, are flesh and blood, upon the like report of your senses, you may answer as readily, that they are not flesh and blood, but bread and wine as they were before. --- If the papists can produce any passage in scripture in which

\* Instructions on the subject of popery, p. 78, 79.

it is affirmed, that in the communion, the elements of bread and wine are, by the consecration of the priest, *changed* into the REAL SUBSTANTIAL flesh and body of Christ, we must then endeavour to adjust the difference between faith and eyesight as well as we can. But till this is done, to enter into all that scholastic stuff, about *substance, accidents, ubiquities*, and I know not what, by which the papists are wont to perplex and puzzle plain understandings, will be but labour lost; it will be as if a man should offer to account why a mill-stone swims in water, when in fact there is no such thing."

I hope authorities enough have been produced, and sufficient to prove, that both the church of *England*, and the most eminent divines of her communion, have expressed themselves fully and clearly against their believing the doctrine of transubstantiation. Innumerable more testimonies might be offered to the same purpose; but I believe it will be thought needless.

But to give the most convincing demonstration that transubstantiation is expressly disowned and rejected by the protestant churches of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, and this in the most public and notorious manner, let me refer to the declaration which, by the 30th of *Car. II.* the 1st of *William* and *Mary*, and the 13th of *William III.* is required to be made by all the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, previous to their sitting in either house; and the same also as to all persons that bear any office civil or military, or who receive any salary from the crown, and all ecclesiastical persons, members of colleges, schoolmasters, preachers, serjeants at law, counsellors, attornies, solicitors, proctors, advocates, &c. and this under certain penalties therein mentioned, to be inflicted on every person neglecting or refusing the same; and which is as follows.



“ I *A. B.* do solemnly and sincerely, in the presence of God, profess, testify, and declare, that I do believe that, in the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, there is not any transubstantiation of the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, at or after the consecration thereof, by any person whatsoever. And that the invocation or adoration of the Virgin *Mary*, or any other saint, and the sacrifice of the mass, as they are now used in the church of *Rome*, are superstitious and idolatrous. And I do solemnly, in the presence of God, profess, testify, and declare, that I do make this declaration, and every part thereof, in the plain and ordinary sense of the words read unto me, as they are commonly understood by *English Protestants*, without any evasion, equivocation, or mental reservation whatsoever; and without any dispensation already granted me for this purpose by the pope, or any other authority or person whatsoever; or without any hope of any such dispensation from any person or authority whatsoever, or without thinking that I am, or *can* be acquitted before God or man, *or absolved of this declaration*, or *any part* thereof, altho’ the pope, or any other person, or persons, or power whatsoever, shall dispense with, or annul the same, or declare that it was null and void from the beginning.”

It is scarce possible for man to express any thing in terms more pertinent, plain, and solemn, than are the words of the above declaration on the occasion. And yet we know, by sad experience, that all this, with the solemnity of an oath, besides, taken at the same time, will not avail to tie

or oblige the consciences of papists ; but they will break through, and act directly contrary to all this. The priest's absolution can disannul and cancel the most sacred engagements. But, can a religion that teaches such doctrines come from God ? Impossible.

And yet notwithstanding such repeated declarations of our church and state, so publicly and universally made against the doctrine of transubstantiation ; notwithstanding such solid reasoning, cogent and convincing arguments of our most able and learned divines, to disprove and expose the monstrous absurdity of it ; what a melancholy truth is it, that we should find any thing asserted in the writings of too many of our learned divines, which gives countenance to the belief of what is directly contrary to the reasoning and arguments before represented ? But alas ! the fact is notorious, and too true to be denied, as I shall presently make appear ; and which must give no less concern to true and sincere protestants, than it does afford matter for our enemies to triumph over us : who even screen themselves under the authority of our church, and some of our divines, producing from thence reasons and arguments in favour of transubstantiation, and the real presence, and by that means, with the greater ease and success, making proselytes to their idolatrous church. For instance, they urge that,

In the catechism, our youth are instructed to say and believe, “ That the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken by the faithful in the “ Lord’s supper.” The devout communicants are also directed, just before receiving the bread, to pray thus : \* “ Grant us, gracious Lord, so to eat “ the flesh of thy dear Son *Jesus* Christ, and to “ drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be

\* Communion service.

“ made

“ made clean by his body, and our souls washed  
 “ through his most precious blood ; and that we  
 “ may be partakers of his most blessed body and  
 “ blood.” Can the words of any sentence, drawn  
 up even by the pope, or his council, in appear-  
 ance more strongly express the belief of the doc-  
 trine of transubstantiation, and the real presence,  
 than these? Nor will the artful priests and jesuits  
 ever give any mollifying or candid interpretation  
 of these expressions to their disciples, as to our  
 church’s real intent and meaning in such words:  
 No : but as it is for their interest to make prose-  
 lytes, so is it their constant method and practice to  
 have recourse to these very expressions, and some  
 others of the like nature, and in the strongest man-  
 ner insist upon them, as a proof and evidence that  
 transubstantiation and the real presence are the cer-  
 tain and undisguised doctrines of our church ; than  
 which nothing, if duly examined into, is more  
 false. However, as the good and blessed martyr  
 bishop *Hooper* said, in a sermon at court, upon an-  
 other occasion, “ So long as altars \* remain, ig-  
 “ norant people would dream of sacrifices,” so we  
 may say, “ so long as such phrases and expressions  
 “ as the above, are continued in our liturgy, and  
 “ appear in the writings of our divines, so long we  
 “ may expect, (I fear) to be charged with favour-  
 “ ing of the absurd and idolatrous doctrines of  
 “ transubstantiation and the real presence.”

I have lately perused an excellent little tract of  
 a very eminent and learned divine, on the sacra-  
 ment of the Lord’s supper, who has given the best  
 interpretation of the words in the catechism of any  
 I have met with ; and it would be unpardonable

\* The word altar was changed for table, in the last settlement of  
 the church. *Headly* on the sacrament, p. 57.



therefore not to produce his sentiments on the occasion, as they are of great weight, and merit the attention and regard of every serious enquirer.\*

“ *Par.* I never could have any notion how the bread was made the body of Christ, or how it was *verily and indeed* taken and received by faithful, *more* than by wicked men, since both alike receive the very same elements of bread and wine.

*Min.* Our Saviour took bread and blessed it, or gave thanks to God for it. His giving thanks to God, made no alteration in the bread or wine, nor changed it from what it was, to something else. When now bread and wine are set apart for the use of the Lord's supper, the setting it apart to that use makes no alteration in it, more than the setting apart any thing else, for any particular use, makes an alteration in the thing so appropriated. When the minister therefore now-a-days sets apart for the use of the communicants bread and wine, he does nothing to the bread and wine but set it apart, and consequently it is bread and wine still. The words he uses to set apart the bread, do not make any change in the bread : and was he to use any particular form of thanksgiving to God for the bread and wine before him on the table, all the purposes of its being a sacrament would be completely answered. Our Saviour ordered bread and wine to be taken ; but he gave no positive form of benediction or consecration. The church has wisely directed the form and manner of setting the bread and wine apart for the purposes intended ; but never designed to intimate that the words used should change the bread into flesh, or the wine into blood.

\* *N. B.* This is wrote by way of dialogue between a minister and his parishioner.

*Par.*

*Par.* But how then is the body and blood of Christ *verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper*? I own the bread and wine are not changed; if therefore the body and blood of Christ be verily and indeed taken, they must be *spiritually* taken: for if they be not *bodily*, they must be *spiritually*, or not at all.

*Min.* To eat bread *spiritually*, and to drink wine *spiritually*, is a direct absurdity; unless by *spiritual* eating of *bodily* things, you mean the eating them to *spiritual* purposes, and with *spiritual* views; and in this sense it is easily possible to *eat bread spiritually, whilst it continues bread*. If any thing else is meant, I readily own my ignorance of it; nor do I think it any shame to be ignorant of what cannot possibly be explained. The bread and wine then is the representation of the body and blood of Christ, and figuratively is called his body and blood; the thing intended, or *signified* by these signs is the body of Christ. To receive, or take, the body and blood of Christ, is the same as to take the Lord's supper; that is, to receive and take what Christ appointed to be taken, (bread and wine) according to his institution, in *remembrance* of him, which all the faithful or true believers do.

I grant the expression in the catechism to be very hard, and easily liable to be much perverted; and therefore I should be glad if (in due time) it were removed. But since we have it, it is fit to understand it in the best manner we can; the bread is figuratively called the body of Christ, *i. e.* his body is justly represented, and, as it were, set before us, by bread. When therefore it is said, that the body and blood of Christ are *verily and indeed* taken and received by the faithful in the  
 Lord's

Lord's supper, the meaning is (when stripped of the figurative words) --- that the thing signified by the bread and wine, is the body of Christ broken, and the blood of him shed ; which body and blood so broken and shed, are *remembered* by the faithful, according to the institution of Christ.

*Par.* But the words are, *the body and blood of Christ*, not the things which *signify* the body and blood of Christ, are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper.

*Min.* True; but remember that we cannot take or receive any thing on this occasion, but what is commanded by our Lord to be given to us. Now nothing is commanded to be given but bread and wine, appointed for this purpose; and consequently no more can be understood, as taken and received by the faithful, but bread and wine, according to Christ's institution, in remembrance of him, which is figuratively called his body and blood.

*Par.* By this meaning of these words, I perceive you do not imagine any *real presence* of our Saviour in the sacrament, but would have me take the bread and wine as representations or memorials only of the body of Christ:

*Min.* I would have you do what our Saviour commanded. If there be no *real presence* promised or declared, what right have you to talk of one? or why should you torment yourself about the *manner* of our Saviour's being *in* the bread, when you have not one word of such language in the new testament? What is this imagination founded on, but our Saviour's saying of the bread, *this is my body*? People might as well conceive our Saviour *really present*, in a particular ineffable manner, in every thing that is *consecrated*, or set apart, (if consecration causes, or occasions, a *real presence*,) as imagine  
a real



a *real presence* from this figurative expression." \*

There is something so easy and plain in this account of a subject, that has exercised the pens of many learned men, but to little satisfaction, and is likewise so reasonable in itself, so agreeable to scripture and truth, that it is really surprizing any one, who duly considers things, can take the words in any other sense. Tho' happy would it be, if the expressions in the catechism, *so easily liable to be perverted*, as the doctor justly observes, (and *some others* in the communion service) were removed, and the sooner the better.

And there is much reason to believe, that from some expressions in our liturgy, too many of our most eminent divines, men of great learning and probity, and even zealous protestants, have been unwarily led to express themselves in a similar manner; a few instances of which, out of many more that might be offered, I will give the reader as before promised. And I shall begin with bishop *Taylor*, the very same good man, whom you have before seen to write so strenuously against transubstantiation.

In his prayer before the communion we may find these expressions. " That I may partake of the Lord Jesus \*. Make me worthy to dwell with thee, to be united to thy infinity, to be fed with thy body, and refreshed with thy purest blood, to become bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh, and spirit of thy spirit. Let me, in this divine mystery, receive thee, my dearest Saviour. --- If Christ be not in the sacrament after a peculiar man-

\* Dr. *Syke's* rational communicant, p. 21 to 24.

\* Worthy communicant, p. 80.

ner, whom, or whose body do we receive? Grant that I may not receive bread alone, for man cannot live by that, but that I may eat Christ†. --- When we present ourselves to God, having received Christ's body and blood within us, we are sure to be accepted. --- You are really to believe the words as they are spoken, ' This is my body, this is my ' blood,' and not to doubt it is effectually made good to you in the receiving." §

And says bishop *Ken*, a man of great goodness and piety, --- " Thy own blessed body and blood, which is verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper. --- I believe thy body and blood to be as really present in the holy sacrament as thy divine power can make it, tho' the manner of thy mysterious presence I cannot comprehend. --- I believe that the bread we eat, and the cup we drink, are not bare signs only, but the real communication of thy body and blood, and pledges to assure me of it; and I verily believe, I shall receive thy most blessed body and blood \*." And in his tract on the church catechism, may be found more to the same purpose. And says *Dr. Biss*, " The bread that Christ gives us in the sacrament, is his body." || Can any papist desire more than this in favour of transubstantiation?

I will now produce, for the reader's satisfaction, the different sentiments of some of our divines, placed in opposite columns, that all may see how inconsistently they write on this subject.

† *Taylor's Worthy Commun.* p. 368, 369, 386.

§ *Golden Grove*, p. 109.

\* *Ken's manual*, p. 77, 78.

|| *Beauty of holiness*, p. 126.

I will begin with Mr. *Kettlewel*. Says he,

“God calls us to his own table, to feast with him as his friends; he treats us with the most magnificent fare, presenting that to us for our food, which one would think were not to be eaten, but adored, even the most sacred body and blood of his own Son, in which he conveys to us all the benefits of our redemption.” *Kettlewel* on the sacrament, *preface*. Again;

“In this sacrament, God gives the body and blood of his own Son. --- What am I, that I should sit down to eat with my blessed Lord, and feed on his sacred body and blood?” *Ibidem*, on sacrament, p. 40, 174.

And says Bishop *Beveridge*,

“He who eateth this bread, and drinketh this cup of the Lord worthily, partaketh of the body and blood of Christ. --- Come to this ordinance, where you may

“Our Saviour says, that the bread and wine we eat and drink, are his body and blood, by which, though we are not to understand, that they are so in their own nature, yet the least we can understand, is, that they are so in their effects. They convey to us all those blessings, which the piercing of his body, and the shedding of his blood, procured for us. In the sacrament we are called to eat Christ’s flesh, and drink his blood, not in their own natural substances, but in their effects.” *Ibidem*, p. 35, 38.

“Eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, is not to be understood in a corporeal sense, as if we eat his very body with our teeth, and drink his ve-  
receive



receive his body and blood, as a pledge and earnest of the mercies God hath promised.”

*Serm.* vol. iv. p. 235, 236,

My next authority is bishop *Kidder*, who was a worthy prelate, of great learning and piety, and yet, by some unwary expressions, he also has given the enemy an advantage over us.

He thus writes,

“ He that drinks of this blood, renews his covenant. --- We receive in this sacrament the body and blood of Christ. He gives us, under the symbols of bread and wine, the body and blood of his Son. As we eat the outward elements of bread and wine, so must our souls receive the Lord Jesus. --- You then that eat of his body, and drink his blood, that have received the body and blood of Christ.---That mouth into which the body of our Lord hath entred. --- God hath not only given us his Son to die for our ransom, but he gives him again in this sacrament, for our food and nourishment. ---To

“ The sacrament of the Lord’s supper doth, after a lively manner, represent unto us the death of our blessed Lord. --- Here we have Christ crucified represented to us ; the bread and wine put us in mind of his body and blood ; and when we see the bread broken, and the wine poured out, we are taught to remember the passion of our Lord, how his body was broke and bruised, and his blood shed for us. God would have us lift up our hearts from these symbols and signs, to that which is signified and represented by them. The body receives the outward symbols, the soul the inward grace.  
our

our worthy partaking of the body and blood of Christ. --- I have taken the body and blood of my Lord. --- Shall I abuse my body which my Lord hath entered into? --- After we have received the body and blood of Christ. --- Grant that I may receive Christ Jesus my Lord. *Kidder* on the sacrament, p. 12, 33, 34, 40, 44, 57, 166, 181, 243.

*N. B.* But how can one part of the bishop's reasoning be truly reconciled to the other? for the elements cannot both be, and not be, the body and blood of Christ.

"I am now convinced, (says the ingenious Mr. *Nelson*) there is no remedy that will cure my follies, but thy body and blood. --- To qualify us for a worthy participation of Christ's body and blood.--Thou feedest all devout minds with the precious body and blood of thy Son. --- Let that mouth be clean that has received the bread of heaven.---

We eat and drink the elements, but it is the soul that feeds on the thing signified and represented. --- Whatever the church of *Rome* is guilty of, yet 'tis certain that we believe the bread and wine to be creatures, and not in their nature altered and changed in substance from what they were."

*Ibidem*, p. 18, 19, 35, 226.

"We on earth commemorate this his sacrifice on the cross, by offering bread and wine, which, after consecration, become the symbols of his body and blood. \*

"In the primitive church, the priest offered up a prayer of consecration to God, beseeching him to send down his holy spirit upon the bread and wine,

\* Practice of true devotion, p. 232.

That I may never forget whom, or what I have received ; but being purified by thy blood, and strengthened by thy body." Practice of true devotion, p. 230, 234, 314, 318, 319.

presented to him on the altar, and to sanctify them, that they might become the body and blood of his Son Jesus Christ, not according to the gross compages, or substance, but as to the spiritual energy and virtue of his holy flesh and blood, communicated to the blessed elements by the power and operation of the Holy Ghost, descending upon them, whereby the body and blood of Christ is verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper."\*

What a medley of words is here collected together, without any authority from scripture or reason?

And, says bishop *Gibson*, " I implore the assistance of thy holy spirit, in my honest endeavours to become a worthy partaker of the body and blood of Christ." On sacrament, p. 87.†

It would be an endless task to give more extracts from the too many authors who write after this manner ; and though their expressions, understanding them in a spiritual sense, may be thought by some to be defensible, yet it must be submitted to every impartial reader, whether there

\* *Nelson's festivals*, p. 579, 580.

† *N. B.* I always imagined it was the common opinion of at least *English* protestants, that we only partook of the *symbols* of Christ's body and blood.



be not from hence sufficient matter afforded for the papists to insinuate from these, and other such phrases, to be found amongst protestant divines, that the church of *England* believes transubstantiation and the real presence? But I cannot avoid mentioning one authority more, and that is Dr. *Nicholls*, whose inconsistency with himself on this subject, though in other respects a celebrated writer, is very difficult to be reconciled. Let us hear him.

\* “ Tho’ protestants do avoid the gross errors of the popish doctrine of transubstantiation, yet do we allow, that our Saviour’s body is really received by all faithful communicants. The elements do not only barely represent our Lord’s body, with his death and passion; but, while we are performing this action, our Saviour’s body, in some inexplicable manner, which we presume not to define, is exhibited to us, if we come to this sacrament with a true faith, and pious resolution; for wicked unbelievers, as our church teaches †, do not eat the body of

§ “ When the bread and wine are said by our Saviour to be his body and blood, it must not be thought to be a substantial change of the elements, as the papists pretend. --- To believe which is contrary to the senses of men, which God has given them to examine the ground of all truths, especially those of religion, by appealing to them in the miracles he wrought for the support of it. Besides, how monstrously absurd is it to suppose Christ’s body to be at the same time in heaven and on earth; to be of the dimensions of a human body, and that

\* On catechism.

† xxix article of religion.

§ *Nichols* on catechism.

Christ, in the Lord's supper." of a wafer; to be broken in one place, and whole in another; upon the altar, and in the bodies of the faithful; moved at the same time, east, west, north, and south, according as the several communicants are seated."

Before I proceed to make a few remarks and observations on what has been offered, it may be necessary to consider two things, which are urged by papists, in favour of transubstantiation. The one is, that they pretend we have as much reason to believe transubstantiation, as the doctrine of the Trinity. Can any person, say they, give a more intelligible account of the mystery of the Trinity, or reconcile that doctrine with our reason, than we can do of transubstantiation? is not the notion of three in one as great a contradiction, as that the body of Christ should be in 10,000 places at once? My reply to this shall be in the words of Dr. *Trapp*. \* " You believe the Trinity, say the papists, and why not transubstantiation? To this I answer, 1st. Because the one is frequently and plainly revealed in scripture; the other not at all: so far from it, that it is contrary to scripture. 2. Because the one is not contradictory either to reason or our senses; the other is contradictory to both. In the doctrine of the Trinity, it is not said that three are one, speaking of the same thing or respect; not that three persons are one person, or three Gods one God; which would be a contradiction indeed: but that three persons are one God, or, which is

\* *Trapp's popery truly stated*, edit. 3. p. 99, &c.

the same, though more plainly expressed, that in the unity of the God head, three persons are included; which is no contradiction, nor any thing like it, any more than it is to say, that there are three lines in one triangle. But it is a thorough one to say, that a piece of bread is a human body, or that the same body can be in 10,000 different places, nay, all over the world, at the same time.

3. In the doctrine of transubstantiation, the subject before us is not only a finite being, but an object of our senses: the outward qualities or accidents of which we so plainly perceive and know, that if we cannot be sure of these things, we can be sure of nothing. But in that of the Trinity, the subject is the nature of God, which (let us take it how we will, even supposing there were no Trinity) is invisible, infinite, incomprehensible; and consequently it is no wonder there should be mysteries concerning it; nay, it is impossible it should be otherwise." And we may as reasonably believe, that we may contain the ocean in a small shell, as that we can fully and adequately comprehend the nature of God, by our shallow understandings. The object is too great for us; and therefore we ought only to believe what we are certain he hath revealed concerning it.

Another thing alledged by papists in vindication of transubstantiation, is the 6th chapter of *St. John*. In order to refute this plea of theirs, I will lay before the reader, as briefly as I can, the sentiments of some of our best writers, which must afford them full satisfaction, as to the weakness of such reasoning. I begin with bishop *Burnet*.

\* " The design of *St. John* in this chapter was to shew, that the doctrine of Christ was more ex-

\* *Burnet on xxxix articles*, p. 389, oct. edit.



cellent than the law of *Moses*; that though *Moses* gave the *Israelites* manna from heaven to nourish their bodies, yet, notwithstanding that, they *died in the wilderness*: but Christ was to give his followers such food, that it should give them life; so that if they did eat of it, they *should never die*. Where it is apparent, that the bread and nourishment must be such as the life was; and that being eternal and spiritual, the bread must be so understood. For it is there clearly expressed how that food must be received; “he that believeth on me, hath everlasting life.” As he had formerly said, that the bread which he was to give should make them *live for ever*; and since it is said, that this life is given by faith, then this bread must be his doctrine; for this is that which faith receives. And when the *Jews* desired him to give them evermore of that bread, he answered, “I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” Christ calls himself that bread, and says, that a man *must eat thereof*, which is plainly a figure. And if figures are confessed to be in some parts of this discourse, there is no reason to deny that they run quite through it. Christ says, that “this bread was his flesh, which he was to give for the life of the world;” which can only be meant of his offering up himself upon the cross for the sins of the world. The *Jews* murmured at this, and said, ‘how can this man give us his flesh to eat?’ to which our Saviour answers, that “except they did eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of man, they had no life in them.” *Ver. 53, 54, 55.*

Now if these words are to be understood of a literal eating of his flesh in the sacrament, then no man can be saved who does not receive it. --- But

the next words carry this matter farther ; “Who-  
so eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath  
eternal life.” It is plain that Christ is here speak-  
ing of that without which no man can have life,  
and by which all who receive it have life. If there-  
fore this is to be expounded of the sacrament,  
none can be damned that does receive it, and none  
can be saved that receives it not.”

But the whole is cleared up in the conclusion  
of Christ’s discourse, *ver.* 61. “ It is the spirit that  
“ quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing ; the  
“ words that I speak unto you, they are spirit,  
“ and they are life ;” which plainly import that  
his former discourse was to be understood in a spi-  
ritual sense : that it was a divine spirit that quick-  
ened them, or gave them that eternal life of which  
he had been speaking ; and that the flesh, his na-  
tural body, was not the conveyer of it. --- And as  
the figure of eating and drinking was used among  
the *Jews* for receiving and imbibing a doctrine,  
it was no wonder if our Saviour pursued it in a  
discourse, in which there are several hints given to  
shew us that it ought to be so understood.”

The learned Dr. *Claget* has published an excel-  
lent paraphrase on the 6th of St. *John*, worthy the  
perusal of every reasonable person. In his preface  
to that discourse, (p. 60.) he thus writes. “ *Cle-  
mens Alexandrinus* supposes these expressions, ‘ to  
eat the flesh of Christ, and to drink his blood,’ to  
be as figurative as that of St. *Paul*, ‘ to feed with  
milk ;’ and tells us, upon this occasion, that the  
word is variously allegorized, being called *meat*,  
and *flesh*, and *nourishment*, and *bread*, and *blood*,  
and *milk* ; and that our Lord is all these things for  
our enjoyment, who believe in him.’ So that this  
father certainly did not interpret the words in the  
6th of St. *John*, of the eucharist. --- And I verily  
G 3 think

think I could make out a title to the *like* consent of all the fathers, with vastly more probability than those who claim it for the other opinion. *Ibidem*, p. 18. To give a few instances.

“ That the substance of bread and wine remain after consecration is manifest, says he, from St. *Cyprian* \*. And that Christ is fed upon by the mind only, from St. *Basil* †. And to observe the words of St. *Austin* concerning the exposition of scripture phrases will be sufficient here §. “ If the saying be preceptive, either forbidding a wicked action, or commanding to do that which is good, it is no figurative saying ; but if it seems to command any villainy, or wickedness, or to forbid what is profitable and good, it is figurative. This saying, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you, seems to command a villainous or wicked thing : it is therefore a **FIGURE**, enjoining us to communicate in the passion of our Lord, and to lay it up in dear and profitable remembrance, that his flesh was crucified and wounded for our sakes.” The vast pains that have been taken to avoid this testimony, are a convincing argument that prejudice may become invincible. This passage so plainly shews St. *Austin*’s persuasion in this matter, that, as it needs no words to illustrate it, so it is capable of no answer to the purpose. *Ibidem*, p. 18, 19.”

Archbishop *Sharp*, in a discourse on these words of St. *John*, “ Then Jesus saith unto them, verily “ I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son “ of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life “ in you.” (*chap.* vi. 53.) thus declares his senti-

\* *Epiſt.* Cæcilium.

† In *Eſai.* cap. 3.

§ De doctrina christiana lib. iii. c. 16.



ments: \* “ This text is, by some of the most learned papists themselves, so far from being urged as an argument for transubstantiation, that they acknowledge, nay contend, that it doth not respect the sacrament at all. Several men of very great name among them have gone this way. Cardinal *Cajetan*, upon the place, gives exactly the same gloss that the generality of protestants do; and expressly denies that these words are to be understood of eating and drinking in the sacrament, and he is herein followed by several of his own party.

“ It will be hard to interpret these words of eating and drinking Christ’s flesh and blood in the sacrament, in the popish sense, upon this account; Christ here speaks of such an eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, as was actually at that time necessary to every man’s salvation. “ Except ye “ eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye have no “ life in you.” This plainly proves that it was not only of obligation to all, but of absolute necessity to all who heard our Saviour, even then, to eat his flesh and drink his blood. But the sacrament of the communion was not at that time instituted, (but at least a year after) nor could the apostles, or any then present, have the least knowledge or intimation of such an institution. Either therefore the apostles had then no life in them, but were in a state of condemnation, or they eat the flesh of Christ, and drank his blood, even when there was no sacrament in use; and consequently could not eat and drink it in the gross literal sense they would have. --- And were we strictly to expound these words of eating and drinking in the sacrament, what will become of those who

\* Serm. vol. 7. p. 348, &c.

never did partake of Christ's body and blood in such way? and of all baptised infants that die before they come to years of discretion? nay, of all persons grown up, who are cut off by death, before ever they come to the Lord's table, as God knows there are abundance? why then, *according to this doctrine*, all such have no life in them, but are in a state of death and condemnation, notwithstanding their baptism. Again,

Their doctrine is, that in the sacrament, the elements of bread and wine after consecration, are turned into the very body and blood of Christ; which they call transubstantiation. But if our Saviour's words in this chapter are to be taken literally, they will rather prove, that the body and blood of Christ are turned into bread and wine; than that bread and wine are turned into the body and blood of Christ. For our Saviour says, "I am the bread of life. --- I am the living bread that came down from heaven; and then adds, they must eat his flesh, and drink his blood." Now how are we to understand this? why he himself explains it; "For, saith he, my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." Now these words will much rather prove that Christ's flesh is turned into meat, or into that bread he was before speaking of, than that the bread is turned Christ's body.

But suppose we acknowledge with them, that in the sacrament we eat Christ's very body, and drink his blood; that we eat and drink Christ himself; yet then they must acknowledge with us, that Christ is true bread (for that the literal sense of his expression doth as necessarily require, as in the former case) and therefore though we eat Christ's body in the sacrament, yet we eat *true bread* also. Now how can we eat Christ's very body, and eat true bread at the same time?

I am sure no answer can be given but what will overthrow transubstantiation; for that doctrine will not allow us to believe that we eat Christ's very body and bread at the same time; but, on the contrary, it lays it down, as an article of faith, that after the bread is made Christ's body, it is no longer bread, but the appearance of it. --- Again, should we admit that the bread and wine in the sacrament are really turned into the body and blood of Christ, in what a miserable condition, upon this supposition, are all lay people among them, that are never allowed the necessary means of obtaining eternal life, required by our Saviour, who expressly says, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." For though the laity do eat the flesh of Christ in the sacrament, yet do they drink his blood? if they do not, then they want one half of the qualification required of them in order to salvation. For Christ hath made the blood as necessary as the flesh; he doth not say, except ye eat my flesh, *or* drink my blood, ye have no life in you; but except ye eat my flesh, *and* drink my blood. Both of them are certainly necessary, if the one be so. And yet every body knows that they deny the cup to all lay people."

From what has been represented, it will, I hope, sufficiently appear, that the bread and wine are not changed or transubstantiated into the real body and blood of Christ; the natural consequence of which is, that then the papists worship that for God, which is *only* and no more than a *creature*: this I shall endeavour to evince in the clearest manner, both by reason and authority.

The *Trent* council teacheth, says Dr. *Whitby*, \*

\* The absurdity and idolatry of host worship, p. 4, 5, &c.

" That



“ That it is not to be doubted in the least, but that all faithful Christians should exhibit the worship of *Latria* to the holy sacrament ;” that is the consecrated wafer, even that worship which is due to God alone, and they pronounce *anathema* against all persons who assert the contrary. --- Their tenet therefore plainly is this, “ That the consecrated wafer is God, united to the man Christ Jesus, latent under the species of bread.” Hence it must follow, that seeing they do eat this consecrated wafer, which (as they say) is as truly God and man as Christ now glorified is, *they do professedly eat the God they worship*. And that you may not doubt of this, the council doth immediately subjoin these words to the fore-mentioned, touching the worship due unto the host ; ‘ The sacrament is not the less to be adored, because, according to the institution of it, it is to be eaten.’ Hence it also follows, that seeing they drink what is contained in the consecrated chalice, and that, according to their doctrine is whole Christ, God and man, contained under the species of wine ; that they drink their God. This is the doctrine of the church of *Rome*, most faithfully discovered to you from their authentic records, and if it only did assert that Christians stood obliged to be *cannibals*, to eat man’s flesh and drink down human blood, even this assertion would contain what is repugnant to the nature of man, what hath been constantly esteemed by the sober *heathens* a barbarous and inhuman thing ; and that which by the ancient fathers was disclaimed and rejected with the utmost horror. But then if we conceive the person who is thus devoured to be also God, and therefore look upon this action as the eating of our God and maker, it is so full of horror, scandal, and amazement, that nothing can be more prodigious, or more blasphemously profane.

fane. *Heathens, Mahometans, Jews, Christians,* have with one voice declared, ‘ That it is a demonstration of the extremity of madness and stupidity, for any man to worship what he eats, or eat what he doth worship ;’ and therefore it is plain *phrensie* to imagine the determination of the *Trent* council, and the doctrine of the church of *Rome*, to be agreeable to truth.” And he proves in p. 11, 12, 13, that nothing did seem more brutish and absurd to the ancient fathers, than to esteem and worship as a God what men did sacrifice.

In the same treatise of Dr. *Whitby*, there are many excellent observations on the subject, which renders it worthy the perusal of every serious enquirer ; but I shall here conclude from him with the following paragraph \*. “ From what hath been discoursed, we have as great assurance as sense and reason, and the concurrent judgment of mankind can tender, that the host cannot be truly God, and consequently, that the *Trent* council doth oblige all Christians, as much as in them lyes, to worship that as God, which is not truly so ; and that the members of the *Roman* church are guilty of *idolatry*, by giving to it that worship which is due to God alone.”

And says bishop *Burnet* †, “ When an insensible piece of matter, such as bread and wine, has divine honour paid to it ; when it is believed to be God ; when it is called God, and is in all respects worshipped with the same adoration, that is offered up to almighty God ; this we think is gross idolatry. Many writers of the church of *Rome* have acknowledged, that if transubstantiation is not true, their worship is a strain of idolatry be-

\* The absurdity, &c. p. 66.

† *Burnet's* articles, p. 427. oct. edit.

yond any that is practised among the most depraved of all the heathen." And I hope it will be evident from what is urged in this little essay, that it is impossible for transubstantiation to be true.

Bishop *Stillington*, in many of his admirable writings, hath both proved the falsity of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the truth and certainty of the church of *Rome's* being guilty of idolatry, by their worshipping what they call the host, that is, the bread and wine in the sacrament, as God; as may be seen more particularly in his discourses concerning the idolatry of the church of *Rome*, to which I would refer the reader. In his preface to the first part, he plainly demonstrates, that the first reformers of our church directly charged the papists with being guilty of idolatry, and among others observes, 'That bishop *Jewel*, in his excellent defence of the apology of the church of *England*, and answer to *Harding*, proves, that to give the honour of God to a creature, is manifest idolatry, as the papists do, in adoration of the host, and the worship of images.'

Let us next hear Dr. *Stebbing* \*. "When Christ blessed the bread and wine, and said *take eat*, &c. do you imagine that he made an idol to be worshipped? and yet every popish priest, when he consecrates the elements, makes an idol. For upon the strength of this notion, that, after consecration, Jesus Christ, both God and man, is corporally present in the sacrament, the elements (as we call them, or, as they, the host) came soon to be considered as a proper object of worship, by which another species of idolatry was brought in unknown to former times. --- The doctrine of the corporal presence, whether true or false, makes no

\* Instructions on popery, p. 86, 87.

alteration ;



alteration ; for admitting that Christ is in the sacrament, as the papists say, the bread and wine being substantially changed into his flesh and blood ; still he is not there in any *visible* manner. Whatever change may be supposed to be made in the elements by the consecration of the priest, we *see* it not, we *feel* it not, we *smell* it not, we *taste* it not ; but so far as our senses can inform us, they are bread and wine, and nothing more. So far then as *appears* to us, the elements which, before consecration, were but symbols, even after consecration are no more than symbols ; and the worship paid to them will therefore be worshipping of God by a symbol, that is, it will be an idolatrous worship : for all symbolical worship is so. --- Image worship is idolatry, howsoever God may be supposed to be *invisibly* present in the image. By parity of reason, host-worship is also idolatry, howsoever Christ may be supposed to be *invisibly* present in the sacrament. Christ was worshipped in the flesh, because he was *God manifested in the flesh*. God was worshipped in the *fire*, and in the *cloud*, because these were the *manifestations* of his presence. And if in the host, there were the *like manifestations* of Christ's presence, we might and ought to worship him in the host as the papists do. But as there is *no such manifestation*, I cannot see but that all worship directed to the sacramental elements, whether changed, or not changed, must be *idolatry*, in as full a sense as bowing down before pictures and images is idolatry."

I apprehend enough has been produced to evince that the papists, by believing the doctrine of transubstantiation, are idolaters ; a fact that I fear is not sufficiently considered by protestants. But archbishop *Sharp* has expressed himself so fully and convincingly on this point, that, in justice to my argument,

argument, I cannot but give the reader the sentiments of that great man on the subject. His words are ;

\* “ The *Romanists* give to the sacrament the very same worship that they give to God, and oblige all those who shall be of their communion to do the same. --- The council of *Trent* declares, “ That by the words of consecration, the whole substance of the bread is turned into the substance of the body of Christ, and the whole substance of the wine into the substance of the blood of Christ ; and that it is not therefore to be doubted, but that all faithful Christians should give to this sacrament, that highest worship called *Latria* which is due to the true God.” And whoever affirms otherwise, is, by a canon of that council, pronounced accursed. And this worship they give to the host, (*viz.* that round wafer which we call the consecrated bread) not only at the time of receiving it, but whenever it is carried about in the street. --- And can it be imagined that the Christian, which doth so strictly forbid all idolatry, should set up a God to be worshipped, which, to all those who will believe their senses, can appear no other than an idol, because it appears a mere piece of bread.

That the catholic church of Christ, in the first ages, had no such kind of worship, besides a profound silence of antiquity concerning it, we have this undeniable argument, that the pagans would have hit them in the teeth with it, whenever the Christians reproved them for their many idols ; but yet we do not find that they ever did. All the writings of the Christian fathers are full of invectives against the heathen idolatry ; they take a great deal of pains to expose the folly and ri-

\* *Sharp's Serm.* vol. 7. p. 322 to 330.

ridiculousness of giving divine worship to that which is but a creature, or the work of a man's hands. But with what face could they do this, if, at the same time, they were guilty of the same practices? --- If a pagan had been present at one of the Christian assemblies, and, at the elevation of the host, had seen them all fall down and worship, would not he think that he had every jot as great reason to reproach them for adoring a piece of bread, as they had to reproach him for adoring the sun, or moon, or any other image? *Minutius Felix*, a very early Christian writer, thus harangues it against the pagans. "They, says he, melt brass; they cast it, they set it up, and fasten it; it is yet no God. They polish it, they adorn it, neither is yet a God. But see, now they consecrate it, they pray to it; then as soon as men will have it to be a God, it is a God."

And might not the pagans return the same railery upon the Christians, supposing the practice we are now speaking against, had been then in use? One of our own divines hath most excellently handled this subject. "Christians, says he, sow wheat, they cut, gather, and thresh it; it is no Christ yet. They grind it, they sift it, they bake it: it is still but a wafer. They set it upon an altar, they lift it up, they cross it several times: it is yet the same it was before. At last they speak the five words of consecration, and presently ten miracles break forth. And among 100 wafers, which are all alike to one another, that which the priest pleaseth to think upon, that is their Saviour." If the practice of the pagans in this matter was absurd and ridiculous, then every jot was as much the practice of the Christians, and might have been as easily made appear so, and would, without doubt, have been made so, had there ever been any such practice among them." The



The archbishop soon after asks this question :  
 “ Were the old pagans idolaters or no ? if they were not, why do the scriptures, and all the Christian writers, charge them for such ? if they were, it will be easy to be proved, that they who adore the host in the blessed sacrament with the worship that is due to God only, are idolaters as much as they. For is it idolatry to worship that for God which is not God ? if it be not idolatry, then the pagans were not idolaters ; if it be, then they who worship the host with divine worship, are idolaters : for certainly that which they worship is not God, is not our Saviour ; but a wafer, a piece of bread. We are as certain that it is nothing else, as we can be of any thing that our senses, backed with the best reason, can report to us. If ignorance and mistake in this matter will excuse the *Romanists*, it will also excuse the pagans ; if it did not excuse these, neither will it those. But all the marks that the holy scriptures give of an idol, and all the reproaches that they cast upon it, do as well besit the popish God in the sacrament, and as heavily light upon it, as upon any thing that was worshipped by the pagans. It is, in both the old and new testament, a mark of a pagan idol, and the reproach of it, that it was made by man. Why ! is not the god in the mass as much the work of mens hands as any of the pagan idols were ? and, bating the labour of the baker, there was none of them ever made so quickly and so easily as this. The speaking but five words, with intention, doth it.

But though all the reproaches that are cast upon the pagan idols in scripture, do fall heavily upon the Christian idol in the mass, (if we may so call it) yet there is one thing for which that worship may be reproached, and which casts such an indignation upon the person they pretend to adore, that  
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never the like affront was put by any pagan on his God. The Romanists have no sooner of the bread made a Saviour, and worshipped him, but they presently eat him. Was there ever such a thing heard of in any pagan country? did ever any man make a god, and then adore him with the same religious worship that he gives to the supreme God, and within a minute after swallow him down, and send him to those places which are not fit to be named? But yet this is done in the church of *Rome* every day. *Cicero* who was a pagan himself, and knew as much of the pagan religion as any man living did, tells us expressly, in his book of the *nature of the gods*, “ That among all the religions of his time, there was no man of any *one sect*, so sottish, as to pretend to eat his god.” The *Egyptians* that worshipped the vilest of creatures, yet never dared to eat what they had once worshipped. But yet this affront the *Romanists* put upon the adorable Jesus, our God and Saviour, every time that his sacrament is celebrated; and, I dare say, they are the first, that ever put this affront upon the Deity.”

Thus have I represented, in as concise a manner as I possibly could, the scripture account of the institution of the Lord's supper, which contains a plain and clear narrative of a matter of fact, of an ordinance of Christ, in itself easy to be understood, as he intended it should be, by persons of all capacities; and what our Saviour then did, was the more intelligible to his disciples, as being very similar to the *Jewish* feast of the Lord's passover, which had just before been celebrated by them. And therefore the words made use of by our Saviour, “ This is my body, this is my blood,” occasioned no manner of uneasiness in their minds; they understanding them in the same figurative

sense with those used by the *Jews*, "This is the Lord's passover," when they commemorate God's passing over the first-born of the children of *Israel*, at their eating of the passover, and that the others were ordered by God to be destroyed by the angel. \*

I have also fully evinced, that the church of *England*, and her most eminent divines, do in general disown and deny, and even reason against the false and absurd doctrine of transubstantiation; nay, that our lords and commons assembled in parliament, and all persons in any place civil or ecclesiastical, are obliged to renounce the doctrine of transubstantiation, by a declaration appointed for that purpose by act of parliament. But as it unfortunately happens, that there are too many unguarded expressions to be met with, both in our liturgy, and the writings of our divines, that seem to give a different and indeed a very mistaken interpretation of the words which our Saviour used

\* It is worthy of remark, and deserves our most serious attention, that wherever the institution of this sacrament is taken notice of in the New Testament, we read nothing of altars, or sacrifices, or oblations, or consecrations; nor yet of con, sub, or transubstantiation; or of any change of the bread and wine, into the real body and blood of Christ; nor of the real, corporal, or spiritual presence of Christ in the sacrament. And were the bread and wine changed into Christ's body and blood, really and in fact, it would surely be as great a miracle, as any our Saviour ever wrought. But then it would manifestly have appeared to be so, to the eyes of all present, as well as all his other miracles did. The water was actually changed into wine, at the marriage feast. The blind were apparently restored to their sight. The lame immediately walked. The dead, to the admiration of all present, were raised to life. The increase of the loaves and fishes was demonstrably evident to the whole multitude. But our Saviour's body still remained the same, after he had blessed or given thanks, and that the disciples had eat of the bread, and drank of the wine, (which he appointed and directed them to partake of, in remembrance of him) as it was before. Nay, the very same identical body was afterwards crucified on the cross, laid in the sepulchre, and then rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and now sits on God's right hand, where it will remain till Christ shall come to judge the world at the last day.

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at the instituting of this sacrament, tending at least to countenance the popish doctrines of transubstantiation, and the real presence, if not asserting as much; I have therefore before selected from them some of the most obnoxious passages, placing them in opposite columns, that the reader may more readily observe the manifest inconsistency of a great number of our divines, and the natural, but unhappy fatal consequences resulting from such injudicious expressions. And this became the more necessary, as they at present afford a handle for papists to impute to protestants, the belief of the same absurd and erroneous doctrines with themselves \*.

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\* In a discourse wrote by *Parker* bishop of *Oxford*, published in 1687, are the following remarkable assertions, in p. 17, 18, 19. of that tract. " 1st. That the doctrine of the church of *England*, as framed by its first *Queen Eliz.* reformers, is so generally expressed, as to admit of a sense owning transubstantiation. 2. That in favour of the papists there are so many expressions in the liturgy, catechism, and homilies, that very lately a great church of *England* doctor, the head of a college, with the archbishop of *Canterbury*, is constrained to hold that the church of *England* is for a real presence in the same sense, the fish and loaves were present to them who fed on them; that is, they are for a corporal presence. 3. They cannot escape falling in with transubstantiation, any other way, than by closing with a notion manifestly false and platonic. All which carefully weighed, I advance to this conclusion, that the church of *England* has hitherto had such favourable thoughts of a corporal presence of Christ's body in the eucharist, and so much compassion for the believers of transubstantiation, and have so far given up the cause to the papist, that they cannot oppose transubstantiation, without embracing as false, and a more absurd notion. --- Again,

Seeing the church of *England* has taken more than ordinary care to give such a general explanation of the real presence, as may admit of a corporal presence, and thus much she hath done with a design to encourage the believers of transubstantiation to join with them in the sacrament, she cannot esteem the adoration of the sacrifice of the mass to be idolatry; for it is well known she would be thought to abhor the holding communion with idolators; and to this she must stick, or give up the cause to the protestant dissenters, who say, that they dare not hold communion with that church that will admit known idolators into their communion. But such doth the church of *England* admit, in admitting the believers of transubstantiation. That  
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I have besides shewn, that the doctrine of the Trinity urged by them in favour of transubstantiation, however difficult in itself to be understood, will not admit of the least comparison with that absurd, unscriptural, and irrational tenet of theirs. And as to the 6th chapter of St. *John's* gospel, I have demonstrably proved from the best authorities, that our Saviour's discourse, contained therein, does not in any respect relate to this sacrament. And from the whole it does most evidently appear, that they are notoriously guilty of idolatry; a crime the most heinous and offensive to God, who will have no other gods worshipped and adored besides himself.

This last article is a concern of so much moment and importance, as to deserve the serious regard and consideration of all good Christians, in particular of our governors in church and state, more especially our bishops and clergy; from whom it may be hoped and wished, that they will, in some proper time, take these important subjects under their inspection; and out of their great wisdom and piety, from a just regard to the truths of the gospel, to the principles of our reformation, and for bringing it to yet greater perfection; but above all, that the crying and abominable sin of idolatry, which in the instance above is manifestly made apparent, may be removed, and no longer meet with encouragement, in the manner it seems

the church of *England* is for admitting the believers of transubstantiation, who adore the sacrifice of the mass, has been abundantly proved; whence it follows, that the church of *England* must either give up the cause to the dissenters, or declare, that the believers of transubstantiation, though they adore the sacrifice of the mass, are not idolators, and that the adoration of the sacrifice is not idolatrous. And if not idolatrous, how can they oblige all to declare it to be idolatrous, or part with their civil rights and privileges for not making such declaration."

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to have done ; I say it is most ardently wished and desired, that they will, in their high stations, become instruments of having our liturgy reviewed, and that all such passages therein, as seem to countenance the doctrines of transubstantiation and the real presence, may be altered and exchanged for others more consonant to the professed and declared sentiments both of our church and state.

And with great deference it is I add, that we may the more reasonably hope for, if not expect this, as we find so many learned bishops and divines of our church, men very eminent and venerable in their times, who have expressed themselves in terms so different and opposite to each other, on a subject that is of the utmost importance to the truth of Christianity, and the defence of our reformation : and though, in my own mind, I am persuaded this flowed from a principle of real piety, and an awful reverence for the holy communion, yet I fear it is, and has been, of very bad consequence. This very material circumstance should methinks be considered as a powerful argument to enforce the reasonable application above-mentioned ; and whereby the papists will be deprived of some of those seemingly plausible reasons which they too successfully urge against protestants, in favour of their idolatrous practices.

From the various authorities I have quoted, and the jarring sentiments of the several writers produced by me, the observing reader cannot but remark, how little regard is to be paid to some authors ; indeed, it should be to none, but where truth and reason are on their side. In concerns of a religious nature, scripture is, and must be, the only standard and rule to direct and govern us, in all such controversies and disputes. For



though reason is a necessary assistant to enable us to find out the truths therein revealed, yet this must be used with the utmost care and caution, lest from a partial regard to any particular doctrine we have espoused, our own surmises and imaginations, by the help of a fallacious reasoning, should be made an article of faith, in the room of what Christ and his apostles have taught and recommended to our belief.

And until something be done by authority, to settle this dispute in a more clear and certain manner, I would beg leave to rest what is here observed with the serious and impartial reader, such as desire to be rightly informed of, and instructed in the truths of Christ's religion, and would only believe and embrace what God has revealed; earnestly requesting them to exert their reasonable faculties, and with the utmost care and integrity, fairly and candidly, free from prejudice and prepossession, to peruse, consider, and reflect on the subject matter of this little essay; composed by one who has no other public or private views, than a sincere endeavour to separate truth from error, to have the church of *England* defended against the wicked suggestions of her most dangerous and inveterate enemies, and that the religion of Christ may appear, and be continued among us, in its pristine and original purity.

Let me then entreat all good people, carefully to examine what has been here proposed to consideration; more especially let them compare the account I have given of Christ's institution of his last supper from scripture, with the scriptures themselves; and let them see if they can find any other matter, or different circumstance concerning this ordinance, than what is before related. If not, as

I believe they cannot, then I hope they will agree with me in the sentiments of that most excellent man, Mr. *Hales*, before quoted, who had the boldness and integrity to publish to the world, his own private thoughts of this sacrament; whose words are here again in part repeated, because I think the following paragraph ought to be impressed on the hearts and minds of all true protestants. \* “ First, in the communion, says that good and honest divine, there is nothing given but bread and wine. 2dly, The bread and wine are signs indeed, not of any thing there exhibited, but of somewhat given long since, even of Christ given for us upon the cross. 3dly, Jesus Christ is eaten at the communion table in no sense; neither spiritually, by virtue of any thing done there, nor really; neither metaphorically, nor literally. Indeed, that which is eaten, I mean the bread, is called Christ by a metaphor; but it is eaten truly and properly bread. 4thly, The spiritual eating of Christ is common to all places, as well as at the Lord’s table. Lastly, The uses and ends of the Lord’s supper, can be no more than such as are mentioned in the scriptures, and they are but *two*: 1. The commemoration of the death and passion of the Son of God, specified by himself at the institution of the sacrament. 2. To testify our union with Christ, and communion one with another, which end St. *Paul* hath taught us.”

Now if this be a true and just explication of words that have occasioned so much contention, so many disputes and controversies; if it contains an exposition that is consonant and most agreeable to the truth of scripture, to right reason, and to

\* Ante, p. 27 to 32.

the nature of a sacrament, as I think all *impartial* persons cannot deny; then let us abide by this interpretation, and abandon and discard all those false glosses, ridiculous and chimerical notions, that have been too long imposed upon mankind; which only tend to confound the understandings of many good people, and to make an easy plain institution of our blessed Lord to contain doctrines the most absurd and irrational, directly contrary to his own intention, and inconsistent with the whole tenor of scripture, and which, in their consequences have a manifest tendency to corrupt and debase true Christianity, and to introduce idolatry and popery throughout the world.

When we crave a blessing at our meals, or should do so, the intent and design thereof is, to thank God for the mercies we are about to receive, and that he would please to sanctify, and to bless his good creatures (but not to make them holy) that they may become useful and serviceable to the support and nourishment of our bodies. And our Saviour, when he blessed the bread and wine, his intention could be no other than to praise and thank God for the opportunity then afforded of instituting this holy sacrament, in commemoration of his passion and death, then near approaching; and that God would bless those his creatures of bread and wine to the uses and purposes to which they were appropriated, that they might become ——— What? Not his body and blood; not his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink, --- But, that his apostles, and all other Christians, by eating and drinking of bread and wine at the Lord's table, in remembrance of Christ's infinite love, in laying down his life for the sinful sons of men, might, by God's blessing on the religious use of this holy rite,



rite, be so enabled to commemorate his bitter passion and cruel death, as thereby to raise in their minds the most grateful sentiments of love and thankfulness towards him; and that the remembrance of such wonderful goodness and mercy, might excite in all Christians holy resolutions to persevere in a constant course of obedience to all God's laws and commandments; and that they should also live in love and unity one towards another. This seems to be the most natural and true interpretation of our Saviour's chief design in instituting this sacrament. It is a means appointed by him for these great ends and purposes; and by our afterwards leading good and virtuous lives, and living in love and charity one towards another, we may hope, thro' God's mercy in Christ, to become entitled to all the benefits of his passion and death; that is, to all the advantages accruing to us, from his body being crucified, and his blood shed, and his offering up himself on the cross, as a sacrifice for the redemption of mankind. And no doubt God will afford the gracious aid and assistance of his holy spirit to all those who conscientiously, and with this religious view, do partake of the Lord's supper.

But as to eating of Christ's natural body, or of drinking his natural blood, either *corporally* or *spiritually*, this is a mere fable, a perfect fiction, not authorized by scripture, but is also contrary to reason, and the practice of the primitive church. The notion was artfully invented, and the belief of it introduced, by the crafty and designing priests of the church of *Rome*, to aggrandize their power, and make them a sort of demi-gods among the people. Wonder, O heavens! and be amazed O earth! at the stupendous impudence of these  
priests

priests of Antichrist, who are almost every-day making gods innumerable; whom they first worship and adore, then eat and devour. But alas! the poor laity! they must partake but of only *half* their God; for they are denied the wine, or what they call the blood of God. They must only eat, but not drink their made God. What blasphemy, what idolatry,\* are these wicked men guilty of? who thus pretend to make God of bread and wine, and then divide him; keeping whole God for themselves, but allowing only one half for the laity.

† “ Let none be offended, says archbishop *Sharp*, that I say the papists *make* their God, or *make* the body and blood of Christ; for it is their own word, and solemnity used by them. And one of the greatest reasons for which they deny our order and priesthood in the protestant church, is, because we in our ordination do not pretend to confer a power of *making the body of Christ*.”

It is by this *hocus pocus* of the *Romish* priests pretending to change the bread and wine in the Lord's supper, into the body and blood of Christ; and by their usurped power of absolving sins, that their religion, or rather system of politics, so greatly prevails and increases in the world. It being almost natural for guilty ignorant sinners, despairing of God's mercy, to have recourse to that church whose priests assume a power not only of making God of bread and wine, but also of absolving sinners here of all their past offences, and of praying their souls out of purgatory hereafter. But was popery once stript of these *three* pretended

\* Ante, p. 89 to 97.

† Serm. vol. 7. p. 327.

claims,

claims, few would be their followers, and their religion soon be at an end.

I have not time here to enlarge on this their darling doctrine of absolution, and which brings immense riches to that church ; but let the following observation of Dr. *Trapp* suffice for the present. \* “ The church of *Rome*, says he, teaches that attrition, without contrition, that is, such a sorrow for sin as proceeds only from the fear of hell, without any mixture of the love of God, or sense of our own horrible ingratitude, joined with the sacrament of penance, meaning auricular confession to, and absolution from the priest, is sufficient for the pardon of mens sins, and their obtaining eternal salvation. Council of *Trent*, *Sess.* 14. *Cap.* 4.

So that according to them, after a man hath lived the most profligate life, if in the hour of death he be sorry for them, only because he is afraid of being damned, (and how is it possible it should be otherwise ? but what virtue is there in this ?) and do but confess them to the priest, and receive his absolution, all is safe. And, from being a child of the devil, he in a moment becomes a child of God, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven. --- For it seems if a man has but half an hour's conversation with a priest, the whole business is done ; and he dies the death of the righteous, though he lived the life of the most wicked. Whether the pope be Antichrist or no, I will not pretend to determine, though he bids fair for that title. But I am sure popery is Anti-Christianity ; and this doctrine, [of absolution] if there were no other argument, as there are an hundred, would

\* Popery truly stated, p 154, &c.



alone be sufficient to prove it. But auricular confession is too gainful a point to be easily parted with. By this they become masters of the peoples secrets, and, which is better, of their money. Therefore the council of *Trent* makes confession to a priest necessary to salvation, and anathematizes, that is, curses all who deny it." But, says archbishop *Sharp*,

\* "What a most mischievous doctrine is this [of absolution] that, after a vicious life, after repeated acts of sin, after many habits of it, inveterately continued in, the priest, by pronouncing three or four words, shall be able to cancel all a man's sins past, and so reconcile him to God, that if he die that moment, he is sure at last of everlasting happiness. How admirably doth this doctrine reconcile those two things, which in all other religions have been thought inconsistent, the love of sin, and the love of God? an habit of vice, and a title to eternal happiness? It is no wonder then, that so many dissolute persons go over to the communion of that church, where pardon and reconciliation with God are to be had upon such easy conditions. — The lives they lead are so bad, that as long as they continue in that state, no other religion but that of the church of *Rome* can give them encouragement to hope for salvation."

Dr. *Stebbing*, after having fully confuted the doctrines of auricular confession and absolution, judiciously remarks, † "That till after the first thousand years, the forms of absolution ran all in the form of a prayer, and not in the form of a peremptory definitive sentence, as it now stands in

\* Serm. vol. 7. p. 206.

† *Stebbing's* instructions, p. 51, 52.

the popish forms, and in one of our own forms from them. How this form came to be retained in our church, I have already hinted ; \* and for the same reasons, it is likely, the popish form of ordaining priests was also retained. These two forms are relative to each other, and cannot stand separately. For the one conveys the power, which the other exerciseth ; and they *are novelties alike*. The ancient manner of ordaining priests, was by imposition of hands, and prayer ; but in the 12th century, the present form was slipt into the ritual ; --- *Receive ye the Holy Ghost : whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained*. There is no harm in the use of these words, provided they be used in a *qualified* sense ; and a very *qualified* sense it must be. But the thing most to be wished, with respect to both these forms, is, that they were *properly* altered.

\* Ibidem, p. 24, 25. " It is *hard to get rid of inbred prejudices* ; and to this I think we must ascribe the respect that is paid to private confession and absolution in the liturgy of our church. What precise notions our reformers had of this matter, it may be hard to say ; but this is certain, that when the reformation first set out, there was a great difference of opinions concerning it. --- Our reformers saw the danger of making it necessary to salvation, and have avoided it. They saw the necessity of repentance, and have very strongly inculcated it. But they did not absolutely declare against the use of private confession and absolution, but left it open to those who could not || otherwise satisfy their consciences ; thinking it better, perhaps, to *manage*, what they could not without danger attempt to *cure*. This however was taking care of the *essential* points ; for whilst every man was left to his liberty, whether to use private confession or not, and the people were taught that without true repentance absolution was of no value, they might be left to speculate upon its *internal operations*, without any hazard to their salvation. But the church of *Rome* hath erred in both these points ; first, in making the absolution of a priest necessary to salvation ; and next in so explaining its efficacy, as to shut out the necessity of repentance, and a new life."

|| See the exhortation to the communion, and the rubric to the visitation of the sick ;

Dissenters would find less matter for censure, and infidels for profane raillery." An excellent remark.

The Doctor then observes, from *Nelson's* life of bishop *Bull*, that he, who was one of the ablest scholars, the staunchest churchman, and the best Christian of his time, "when he was upon his death-bed, refused to have the form of absolution in the office for the visitation of the sick, read; but ordered the minister who attended him, to use the form in the communion office; which is indeed a most excellent form of prayer, truly primitive, and as such should be recommended to all Christians upon the occasion." Indeed,

It is by such innovations and corruptions of doctrine, that Christianity, as before observed, is become the ridicule of deists and infidels, and that we see so little of practical religion among us. And unless the axe be laid to the root of the tree, and that the evil things too abounding among us, and the cause that gives occasion for such unbelief, be taken away; all the reasoning and arguments of the most judicious writers against popery and infidelity will be unavailing, and of no real service to convince the one, or the other. If the tares be not pulled up, the wheat will not thrive and grow; the erroneous unchristian tenets, artfully introduced by crafty irreligious men into the Christian system, must be carefully rooted out and extirpated, before religion will again recover itself, and be brought into general esteem. By our cavilling about, and insisting upon certain principles and doctrines, as fundamentals and essentials of religion, which are no where revealed in the Gospel of Christ, we are only catching at the shadow, and losing the substance; for, if we adopt new articles of faith, that are not to be found in the scriptures, and embrace the



the inventions of men instead of the word of God, we thereby reject the laws and instructions of our blessed Saviour and his apostles, which by consequence will become neglected by us, and rendered of little or no effect.

The Christian system, I mean the revelation of God's will by Christ, is clear, plain and easy, level to the capacity of all people, in all points essential to salvation, and throughout consistent with itself. Indeed, had it not been so, it could not have come from God, who would not have published a revelation of his will to his creatures, that was unworthy of himself.

If then we are Christians indeed, and protestants truly reformed from popery; if we have a true sense of the heinous nature of idolatry, and would have it abolished in our nation; let our conduct and behaviour correspond with, and be agreeable to, those valuable characters. Let us be so in reality and truth, and not in name and pretence only. Let us carefully watch and attend to every attempt of our vigilant adversaries, who are incessantly endeavouring to impose on us their own traditions and inventions, even idolatry of the worst sort and kind that ever entered into the minds of men, for the doctrines of Christ and his apostles. --- Let us labour rightly to understand God's will revealed to us in the New Testament, and duly observe and practise the rules and directions therein contained. Then would our faith be true and steadfast, our lives holy and blameless; then will all men know, that we are not only the followers, but the real disciples of our Lord and Master; then will our light so shine before men, as sincere Christians and reformed protestants, that we shall thereby glorify our Father, who is in heaven; and then shall

shall we undoubtedly procure to ourselves the blessed effects of Christ's passion and death, and all the benefits thereof, even in as full and ample a manner, as if we did really eat his natural body, and drink his natural blood, at the Lord's table, was it in the nature of the thing possible to be done. I will conclude in the words of *Dr. Trapp*.

\* " I have, says he, fully shewn in many instances, *that* popery itself tends to make debauchees of some, atheists of others, and reprobates of all. It is indeed entirely calculated for the gratification of lust, covetousness and ambition ; for the wealth and power of the pope and his creatures ; the enslaving of the other clergy and the laity ; and the eternal perdition of all. It is a mere scheme of worldly politics, carried on under the pretext of religion ; which is no further made use of, than as it is subservient to temporal laws and interests. This is the wisdom of popery ; a wisdom " which descendeth not from above ; but is earthly, sensual, devilish." The profound policy of the court of *Rome*, the conclave of cardinals, the *Italian* bishops, and the order of jesuits in all countries, are well known to the world : and we are ready to yield them the precedency in that wisdom ; the profound wickedness of it being well known likewise.

But the unchristian policy of popery in general is seen in nothing more, than in being so contrived, as to flatter the lusts and vicious inclinations of men. Hence it is, that as the weak and superstitious on the one hand, so the wicked and debauch'd on the other, are most easily persuaded to turn papists : even men of good understandings, though they can never bring their reason to approve of that religion, or digest its gross absurdities, may heartily wish it true, and so embrace it at a ven-

\* Popery truly stated, p. 190 to 194.

ture,

ture, because it is so very indulgent; and because by embracing it, they think they may have some chance for their salvation, though a very wretched one; as they have long been wicked and intend still to continue so, Christianity gives them no hopes. But popery, supposing what it says to be true, gives them a great deal. 'Tis but to throw themselves into the arms of that church, be *atrite* for their sins, confess them to a priest, receive his absolution, and they are safe. Of this indeed they can never be thoroughly persuaded. Yet who knows, say they? Possibly it may be so; I have no hopes any where else, 'tis but to try. \* But what a miserable broken reed is this? --- Such is the genius and constitution, the nature and tendency of this most corrupt religion. Let any man then ask himself, whether it be not in every respect the perfect reverse of Christianity."

\* I have heard it asserted with much appearance of truth, that there are recent instances of three noble lords, of great parts and abilities, who on their death-beds declared, that they died in the communion of the church of *Rome*, though each of them had for some years before, and at the time of their respective deaths, enjoyed places of great honour, trust, and confidence; and to qualify themselves for the same, had also taken the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, and made the declaration against transubstantiation required by law. And must not this be shocking to all protestants who hear of it? But what religion must that be, and from whence proceed, which can countenance and encourage such principles? What honour and virtue can those be supposed to have, who act and practise such base things? But alas! what crimes are there, of which papists may not by their priests, as they think, be absolved?

F I N I S.



[ 13 ]



## E R R A T A.

P. 4. l. 25. after liturgy, *read*, should be altered. P. 46. l. 21. *read*, we being many. P. 46. Note, *read*, *John* baptized with water to repentance, and our Lord with. In the same Page, and in line 3. of the said Note, *read*, that such baptism was changed. P. 47. l. ult. in Note, *read*, the most. P. 68. l. 29, *read*, and commons.

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